

Punch

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Life's simple pleasures

*... I think and think on things impossible
And love to wander in that golden maze.*

That was Dryden, writing three centuries ago – and most of us ever since have wandered at some time or other in that same maze. The pleasure of day-dreaming is thus time-honoured as well as widespread and you may therefore continue to enjoy it with a clear conscience. If you see yourself scoring a Test Match century or rescuing the maiden in distress or even leading the forlorn hope, we can only say – good luck to you! But if you operate on a less spectacular level; if, for you, a castle in Spain simply means a car in the garage or a refrigerator in the kitchen, we could perhaps be more practical. The Midland Bank PERSONAL LOANS Service has the remarkable ability to transmute 'things impossible' into things actual. It might, therefore, be worth while bringing its power to bear upon your particular day-dream.





Articles

- 308 SIRIOL HUGH-JONES
Cradle to University: I'm a Rabbit, See?
- 311 BERNARD HOLLOWOOD
Dispatch from Moscow
- 313 H. F. ELLIS
Wait for It
- 314 J. B. BOOTHROYD
The Expensive Thirst
- 316 A. P. H.
Pillory
- 318 B. A. YOUNG
The Catherine Squeal
- 320 CHARLES REID
Architecture Considered as One of the Fine Arts
- 322 R. G. G. PRICE
Where Are They Now?

Verse

- 317 P. E. C.
Anti-Uglies

Fiction

- 334 CLAUD COCKBURN
We're Strangers Here Ourselves: 6

Features

- 324 TOBY COMPETITIONS
- 325 ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT
Percy Somerset
- 326 FOR WOMEN
- 328 IN THE CITY
Lombard Lane
- 328 IN THE COUNTRY
Leslie Marsh

Criticism

- 329 BOOKING OFFICE
Christopher Hollis: Uber Alles
- 331 THEATRE (Eric Keown)
- 332 FILMS (Richard Mallett)
- 333 RADIO (Henry Turton)

Subscriptions

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1

The London Charivari

A POPULAR recreation in the United States has for a long time been the al fresco cinema. Now I see the L.C.C. have plans to install open-air TV in their parks this summer. These are to be twenty-seven-inch screens "suitably protected," which I take to be from hooligans rather than viewers, although I can hardly imagine Park Department standard mesh wire-netting will be an aid to enjoyable vision. And I wonder too whether the ticket collectors will wait for natural breaks before stalking their deck-chaired prey. I shall wait and view.

Thrift Adrift

THE issue to schools of the National Savings Movement's pamphlet *Looking*



Ahead, "a handbook for the teaching of money management," has not come at the most timely moment. Most teachers are busy explaining to everyone that they can't manage on theirs.

Family Favourites

NEPOTISM is an American know-how we have never really mastered. Unmonied English M.P.s reduced to such meagre shifts as sharing a secretary, as many do, must have gnashed a Welfare denture or two when they read of U.S. Representatives and Senators with wives, sons, daughters, brothers and in-laws on the pay-roll at public expense, one having made his nineteen-year-old

son administrative assistant at a salary of £2,300. This is one of the few cases in which "It can't happen here" rings a true bell. Even poor Randolph Churchill, son of the greatest of them all, has to go footslogging round the dachas in the snow when the warmest seat at home, Bournemouth, is denied to him, let alone any possibility of acting as G.O.M.'s P.R.O. And imagine the opportunities lost because of our puritanism to that grand old Labour veteran Arthur Hayday of Nottingham, now no longer with us, whose eighteen children would have represented, at U.S. rates, a potential income producer of about £40,000 or so. In this sense "Bob's your Uncle" could never have been a valid English political catchword, even to a Cecil.

Almost Alone

MR. KHRUSHCHEV's recollections of his 1956 visit to Britain made no reference to the fact that he was accompanied by Marshal Bulganin. He may of course have forgotten—just as so many reports



of Mr. Macmillan's present exploits seem to forget—that he is accompanied by Mr. Selwyn Lloyd.

1066 and Now This

THERE was something wildly romantic about the story of the two foreign fishermen found stealing sheep on the west coast of Harris one Friday



"Let's face it, gentlemen—we're really missing Mr. Dulles."

afternoon in late February. A game-keeper, according to a local report, "saw two foreign lobster boats anchored in the loch. He came on two foreign fishermen with rifles slung over their shoulders dragging the carcass of a fat sheep across the heather towards a small boat drawn up by the shore. He could see two dead sheep in the boat." Who are these swashbuckling raiders, making their daring forays on Friday afternoons on the lonely fringes of our island home? And what other prizes besides sheep do they pack into their lobster boats? Do they sneak up the Thames with muffled oars to snatch laying hens from quiet back-gardens? Are furtive foreign vessels constantly pulling away from our shores crammed with corgis, woodpeckers, errand boys, stuffed pike, Aylesbury duck and prime Stilton cheeses? And are we to suffer this daylight invasion and plunder without lifting a finger? Cap'n, art tha sleepin' there below?

Double-Thought for To-day

LEFT-WING Orwellians noted, with a certain amount of masochistic relish, how the benevolent Tory mask slipped the other day when Mr. Macleod was heard admitting with remarkable frankness that "in 1984 the Labour Party would not exist."

Something Afoot

QUESTIONS in the House about whether Russia was a possible customer for the Government's one

million pairs of surplus Army boots were turned off easily with quips about Mr. Macmillan as a hat salesman. I am still hoping that a really persistent questioner will one day force an official explanation of how an Army of 180,000 ever comes by a million pairs of surplus boots (or, say, 20,000 tons of zinc or 6,000,000 pairs of W.R.A.C. knickers). Five pairs of boots behind every fighting man, and surplus at that, seems too many. Why are they surplus? What's wrong with them? Are the eyelets too small for the modern hygienic lace? Are they too big in the welt for a smart about-turn? I don't mind what answer I get, but it would be nice to have one—coupled, if possible, with a few million surplus pounds knocked off the next lot of Army Estimates.

Unique

MISS SHIRLEY BASSEY was much distressed at the theft of her mink fur stole because, as one report said, "she had saved up and bought it out of her own money." In these days of massed entertainers it is more important than ever for a girl to have some gimmick.

Transport of Delight

OBVIOUSLY any attempt to improve conditions in buses is for the good. Better buses—more people



"I, too, hope I won't have to wear it again, dear, but I might."

travel on them—less in cars—buses get there faster—buses better still—and so on. An example, if only hypothetical, of that rare thing the Virtuous Circle. But I question the idea of paying a bonus to conductors calculated on the number of passengers they carry. Are we to go back to the old days of rival conductors tugging at the same passenger with cries of "I saw him first!"? And what about the temptation for buses to dawdle along the kerbside while the conductors solicit passing pedestrians? The Minister of Transport can't be anxious to get his department embroiled in a snarling-match with the Home Secretary.

Pi in the Sky

OVER-READY acceptance of Britain's second-class-power status was effectively checked by the news that work is to start again on the new Herstonceux telescope, a 100-ton, 98-inch aperture instrument which will give us "a leading international position in astronomy and astrophysics"—and prove a boon of course to any less advanced nation that wants help in keeping track of its sputniks.

Sermons in Tape

NOBODY would seriously object to the marvels of modern science and technology being used to further the cause of religion, but there is something rather sad about the newspaper report that a clergyman in Dover has his Sunday morning sermon recorded on tape and played back for the evening service. One would like to have more details of this curious enterprise. Is it intended to ease the burden of an over-worked incumbent? To fight the menace of the clergy-shortage? Or simply to make the congregation at Evensong (conditioned as they are by radio, television and gramophone) feel at home? Whatever the reason, this development is certainly surprising, and we must hope that it does not eventually lead to canned choirs, recorded organs, and vicars filmed in glorious colour.

— MR. PUNCH

MOTOR IF YOU MUST

A new series by J. B. Boothroyd opens next week.



NATURAL BREAK?

CRADLE TO UNIVERSITY



3 I'm a Rabbit, See?

By SIRIOL HUGH-JONES

BETWEEN the ages of one and five children become capable of walking, speech, Method acting, and the most amazing output of action painting. Some also acquire the arts of reading and writing, and are familiar with a good selection of gems from English literature. I treasure one or two strange-to-relate stories about the very young; Einstein, heavily occupied with thinking, is reputed to have said his first word at five years old; Sir Compton Mackenzie read at *two*; and there was the intimidating child who, on learning to speak, remarked with a hearty laugh "Only think, father blows his nose in B flat."

One of the reasons why it is impossible to generalize about this weird and captivating age-group is that its ranks contain dreamers, social workers, political planners, bandits, plumbers, escapologists, housewives, revolutionaries, gamblers, canteen workers, field-marshals, engineers, knock-about comedians, miners, models, television critics, racing drivers, steeplejacks and mural painters working in daring new materials such as mashed potato and fruit juice. Some small children are sleek and elegant by nature, with all the gloss and charm of circus ponies. Others, especially in winter, have the monolithic quality of mountaineers, as of someone who is all made of scarf and constantly about to say "Damn nice to see you, Ed." First-class child psychologists may have some key to the mechanism. Most parents live on a day-to-day basis and call themselves tired, amazed and lucky.

Once children stop zooming about with incredible speed, cunning and agility on all-fours and take to their feet (a process which, though common to all and humdrum enough in its way, is nevertheless so amazing and world-conquering that you feel speech should

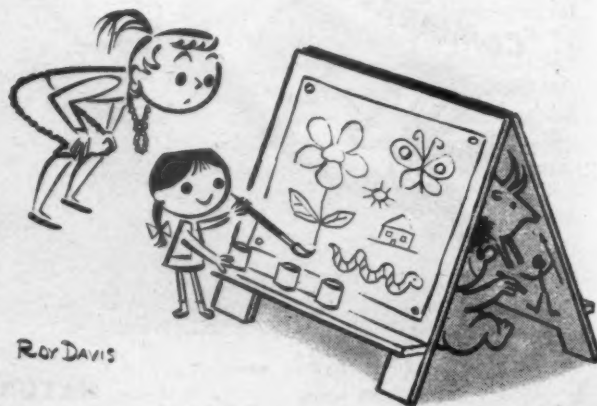
come too, at once, out of sheer astonishment) they are thereafter and for some time called toddlers, a coy soppy word for individuals of dignity, intelligence and resourcefulness. And at this point Gesell and Spock and many another wise and honourable man and even a staunch (though necessarily pre-Spock) grandmother will begin to seem alarmingly human and fallible, just like all the rest of us. Do not be fooled: the person in nappies is not the only one who is just learning how to walk.

It is, of course, a person you are reckoning with, and it is wise to remember from time to time that your son or daughter will probably look almost exactly the same at thirty as at three, given starchier clothes and some extra pounds and inches. In the case of small girls it must also be borne in mind that at certain times, unpredictable and apparently without cause, you will find yourself looking into the eyes of a competitive woman in a smock and button shoes. It is therefore as hard to write an article, or for that matter a book, about Toddlers as, say, about People between the ages of twenty and forty. No two are like in any but the most superficial ways. No plan will take you all the way.

Very small children, like adults, can be volatile, stolid, imaginative, moody, secretive, charming, unattractive, irresistible, talkative, inarticulate, practical, stubborn, pliant, aggressive, bouncy, lethargic, and anything else you like to name. Just like adults, there are some you want as close friends and

confidants, and some with whom it is only going to be possible to maintain a politely barbed truce (I'm talking about other people's children at this precise moment). The thing all small children, even the plainest, share—though I wouldn't necessarily call it clouds of glory—is a quality of being unmarked by experience. The Victorians would have said "innocence" unflatteringly and with eyes turned heavenwards, but the word has become a little rubbed at the edges. I mean they have rarely had the opportunities for such acts of meanness, betrayal, revenge and minor chicanery as you will meet at any cocktail party, nor have they learnt much of the art of dissembling. This may make their company alarming, yet salutary and stimulating.

Small children are at first tremendously tiring to be with for twelve hours at a stretch, accustomed as most adults are to at least brief periods of complete silence and little snoozes with the newspapers and time-for-a-break-for-coffee. This means you must accustom yourself to talking at breakfast. It also means you must develop some defence-mechanism that automatically switches



on when they waken you from the deepest level of sleep with some cosmic and sometimes faintly sinister discovery, often hissed into your ear before dawn, such as "Inside I am full of blood and bones and Easter eggs from last year right down by my feet," while prising open one of your eyes and peering into it at point-blank range. When you meet your child, barefoot and uncoated on its mysterious, intent way to study a picture-book on the doorstep in a pitch-dark fog in February at bath-time, you will be wise to think of a more enticing, and therefore successful gambit than "No," or "Surely this is unreasonable." You must devise ways, after a crisis, for mutual forgiveness to take place with minimum loss of face all round. You must work out the problem that has aged many women before their time, of what to do when your child, purple with rage and grief, lies down on the High Street pavement smack in the way of the milling throng and darling old ladies with shopping baskets come up to it and say "Why are you crying so sadly, my little one?" while darting you looks that kill and thinking how unrelaxed you look. (Here the books all advise either walking calmly away while murmuring to the child to follow when he feels like it, or "putting him cheerfully under your arm and finding somewhere where you can both cool off together," which seems fine for parents of slender, limp children who live in the middle of an open field.)

You learn by your mistakes, but rarely fast enough, since the child grows ahead of you all the time. One of the hardest things to learn is the art of child conversation, which is as catching as measles but is also often hard to keep running smoothly while cooking the lunch. It often goes like this: "The Man in the Moon came down too soon . . ."

"What man?"

"In the moon. You know. I just said the Man in the Moon."

"Sometimes you say Lady Moon, that's what it is in the song. Why did he go to the South?"

"I'm coming to that bit. He asked his way to . . ."

"Who did he ask, the man?"

"What man? I never said any man."

"The Man in the Moon, who did he ask? What man?"

"What?"



"You ought to say 'I beg your pardon.' Could I just help you with the flour and please find my rolling-pin. Tell me about when Robin Hood met Baba Yaga in Sherwood Forest. Are we going out to tea this evening or to-morrow morning? When is it to-morrow? Let me just do that bit with the flour . . ."

There is no reason for this ever to come to a conclusion, which is why so many child-care books emphasize the importance of knowing how to Create a Diversion.

The best kind of diversion is other children. If you lived most of your life in a terrible jungle of giant legs the most reassuring thing must be someone your own size. But it is unsafe to assume that a child will automatically take to someone roughly his own age and build. (Some of my best friends are five foot three, but it hasn't necessarily been the first thing I liked about them.) Children often have an uncannily adult way of disliking each other on sight, and the mere fact that you love the other set of parents won't help things an inch.

Other good and time-honoured diversions include making tents out of two chairs and a rug and practically everything portable in your house, dressing

up with all the clothes you can spare and some you can't, painting (the best kind obviously comes in tubes, but this is millionaire stuff and even Picasso's daughter has to use crayons) and dancing. (I stake my life on Dalcroze classes for the very young, where you aren't clobbered up with shoes and frilly petticoats and it doesn't matter if your toes won't point.) Walks and books clearly aren't so much diversions as necessities. Sometimes, if you are having a bad Monday, the best way of coming up to Snow White for the thousandth time round is to tell yourself that a small child is someone who doesn't have a packet of cigarettes and a newspaper and a good library subscription.

Despite pockets of child-reform here and there, it seems to me that past generations of children were created and brought up by parents who practically never doubted that their way was the right one. At a certain level of society and importance you were wet-nursed, corseted, dressed as a dwarf adult, and learning Greek at the age of five, and that was fine with everybody. After Freud, progressive parenthood, the rigidity of the Victorian code of behaviour, and the rise of the anxious middle-classes, nothing is so simple any more. At what point does as much



"Mr. Rawlings is rather reserved."

freedom as possible become not enough control? How do you balance repression against the fact that an uncivil, markedly self-willed child is an object unlikely to be tolerated by other people? Shades of the Child Guidance Clinic begin to close in early upon the dutiful growing parent. Already there are rumours of a counter-revolution, and murmurs against "over-permissive behaviour" can be heard from America, where a nation of conscientious and indulgent King Learns can already be heard regretting their total abdication.

One good thing brought about by comparatively recent theories of child-care has been the much-needed re-appearance of father in the pre-school child's life. (It was Mr. Moulton Barrett who gave Father a bad name, and before him even such impossible fathers as Henry VIII and Byron realized from time to time and in

flashes, though often too late, that fatherhood was a continuous role with a chance of a long run.) It is, I hope, no longer possible for Father to be a cross between Jehovah and an ogre, nor can he revert to his awful and mercifully temporary position as a dear old horridly boyish chum, an elder brother you called by his Christian name to keep the poor fellow in a good humour. And Mr. Darling stopped all that business of being a cipher in one's own house—though you may always observe little outcrops of plaintive dog-kennels breaking out here and there. Father has certain obvious advantages, such as often being calmer, better groomed, less cluttered up with shopping baskets, more objective and bigger than Mother—all attributes which inspire confidence and trust. I don't think he should be saved up like a Sunday treat, but it's probably better not to break his proud

free spirit with too much of the day-to-day routine stuff.

Very small children like company, being busy (not all of them are inventive, and most of the time you have to think of good things for them to be busy at), knowing what to expect, ritual and ceremony, and pouring water, sometimes but not always into some sort of container. The fantastic energy with which they are charged seems limitless, but can in fact drain off suddenly without warning and with no reserve to fall back on. Creatures of pronounced habit, they will stop at the same place on a walk each day, hang over the same fence, climb fanatically up the same flight of steps, walk three times round the same tree, yet take with unanticipated calm and pleasure to foreign holidays and foreign food, provided you don't take them on a tour of cathedrals. (It is a touch disappointing the way they

accept air travel as something normal and unmagical like being pushed around in a pram, and the sight of cotton-wool clouds outside the window and relief-map mountains down below seems to strike them, if at all, as just the sort of thing you might expect.)

What they do not like is being hurried, bored, having to wait, being lifted off the ground by anyone they don't know well, being helped on and off buses by kindly strangers, too many new faces crowded together in the same room, trying on clothes in shops and having their heads ruffled by passers-by, a thing one would hardly fancy, heaven knows, oneself.

It is quite a difficult and complicated thing to be a very little child, what with being an object of profound interest to psychologists, novelists and film directors (think how unconcerned the Elizabethans were with the small child as a fit subject for literature unless some question of legal mayhem concerning inheritance and succession was involved), and having frequently baffled parents uneasily juggling their own stress-symptoms against the traumas of the younger generation. In a moment of passion the under-fives may hack you on the shins, and when they are quiet and busy it is not unlikely that they are kneading a rich paste of glue, Plasticine and biscuit crumbs into the carpet. But they are so kindly too, so warm-hearted, unselfconscious, bizarre, constant, so full of curiosity and dignity, so much involved with action and so little preoccupied with motive, that one understands why the twentieth century—once having discovered them—is reluctant to put them back into place as perfectly ordinary, though small, human beings.

Meanwhile, you go on playing the cross-talk more or less by ear.

"My, you have given your nose a bump."

"Which nose? This one?"

Other contributors to this series will be:

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Dispatch from Moscow

(Delayed and Censored)

By BERNARD HOLLOWOOD

IT has been a wonderful, memorable week. Tuesday, I collected a bunch of correspondents from the *Mail*, *Herald*, *Chronicle*, *Express*, *Sketch*, *Mirror*, *Times*, *Telegraph* and *Tatler* and lit for Moscow's Montmartre. We left our rendezvous, or dacha, in a troika. (A dacha is a wooden house, rather like a Swiss chalet or a log cabin or an English pre-fab., and a troika is a sort of sleigh, but wired against wolves.) En route for the Mirabelle we talked of the Macmillan-Khrushchev meetings with bated breath—all the breath here is bated—and agreed that M. and K. were doing a goodish job. Then into the steam-heat of the nite-spot.

There was an eight-piece band in full blast. Couples were dancing on the polished wooden floor. There were a few triples too in the Gents' Excuse-me foxtrot. We picked up a menu and Curran of the *Evening News* told us that borsch cost eleven shillings without rusks. We settled for Caucasian champagne at seventy-two roubles a bottle, and made notes in our notebooks. All over Europe the roubles were running out.

The girls wore low-heeled shoes and farmhouse frocks. No make-up. They danced divinely but were definitely not

hep. Their teeth were good and numerous.

Her name was Mascha (I think). "You speak English very well," I volunteered.

"Thank you," she said. "I listen each day to American Forces Network."

"And Mr. Macmillan," I queried. "What of him?"

"Cool," she said, "real cool . . ."

Afterwards, Mascha and I joined the others at our table, and we argued deep into the night about whether Mr. M.'s famous hat was or was not lined with silk. Forrest, the Russian-speaking diplomatic correspondent of the *Chronicle*, ventured the information that the song being sung by Elena Maslinikova was "If I Loved You." Don Iddon said it was "One Fine Day" from *Madame Butterfly* and Douglas Clark (I think) of the *Express* said it was something called "Thank Heaven for Little Girls" from *Lolita*. We danced.

Much, much later we watched Russians making little holes in Red Square, through which to fish. To us it made no sense, but we were conscious of being foreigners in a strange land.

Wednesday, I was sitting biting nails and caviar twigs in my hotel (The Eurasian, 47 roubles B. & B.) when



"L.A.C. Jones, will you kindly hang out the washing and stop gazing at aircraft?"

'phone rang. Customer announced himself as Guy Burgess and asked whether he might come up. I said certainly and bring a bottle. I waited perhaps two hundred and thirty seconds. Then 'phone rang again and self-styled Burgess said would Georgian Burgundy do because liquor store out of vodka. Man claiming to be Burgess looked me over. "I am Guy Burgess," he said, manfully. "I am still a Commie and a pervert."

"You are neither Guy Burgess," I said, "nor have you the bottle of Georgian Burgundy."

"For answer," said the man, "I produce a bottle of Caucasian Liebfraumilch." And he did.

Burgess—if that was his name—told me that he wanted to get back to Britain fast. "I may be useful," he said, "I have a complete knowledge of British political set-up. Everybody writes me long letters, including, Tom, Harold, Edna, Kings, Joey, Toddsy, Fryter, Constock

and Colin. I am strictly *au fait* and I could earn my borsch with either party on the steel nationalization lark."

Burgess—if it were he—looked fatter than his pictures and rather down-at-heel. I noticed, not too noticeably, that the band of his trilby had been darned, and that his shoe-laces were a length of old flex.

"How are they treating you?" I said bluntly.

"I make out," he said. "I have all I need and more . . ."

"And yet, and yet . . .?" I invited.

"I want to come home. Will you put in a word with the P.M.?"

I said that I would see what I could do. Burgess—it could, I suppose, have been Maclean—left. I went to the lavatory and puked. I noticed that there was no plug. That there was not even a basin.

You remember Nina? Nina Pomomareva or Povomarina? (Note to printer: check sp.) Well, the Affair Nina

is right back in the news again. So far the story of Macmillan's third private secretary has not leaked Britainwards, but it is worth the telling. Seems that *someone* pretty high up in the party was arrested leaving GUM, the king-size Muscovite store, accused of stealing five fur hats. One, significantly enough, was off-white and *very* tall. A beaut. Whole business hushed up and Randolph C. furious because he had just filched three groikas (Russian deerstalkers) and had *not* been arrested. But the Englishski hat-trick is currently the big laugh in Moscow's bars.

Friday. It is snowing. The snow is white. And it is generally assumed that the Khrushchev-Macmillan talks are proving useful.

Moscow is a fine city, though cold. From my window I can see a winter wonderland—the Kremlin, the Riga Bar, the Stalin Polytechnic, Gorki Prospect, three Sputniks, the BUG department store, Avenue Dulles, the Planetarium and the Communal Mortuary. Everywhere the snow lies deep. A solitary crossing-sweeper wipes her nose on the back of her hand and smiles. They are an enigmatic people, the Russians.

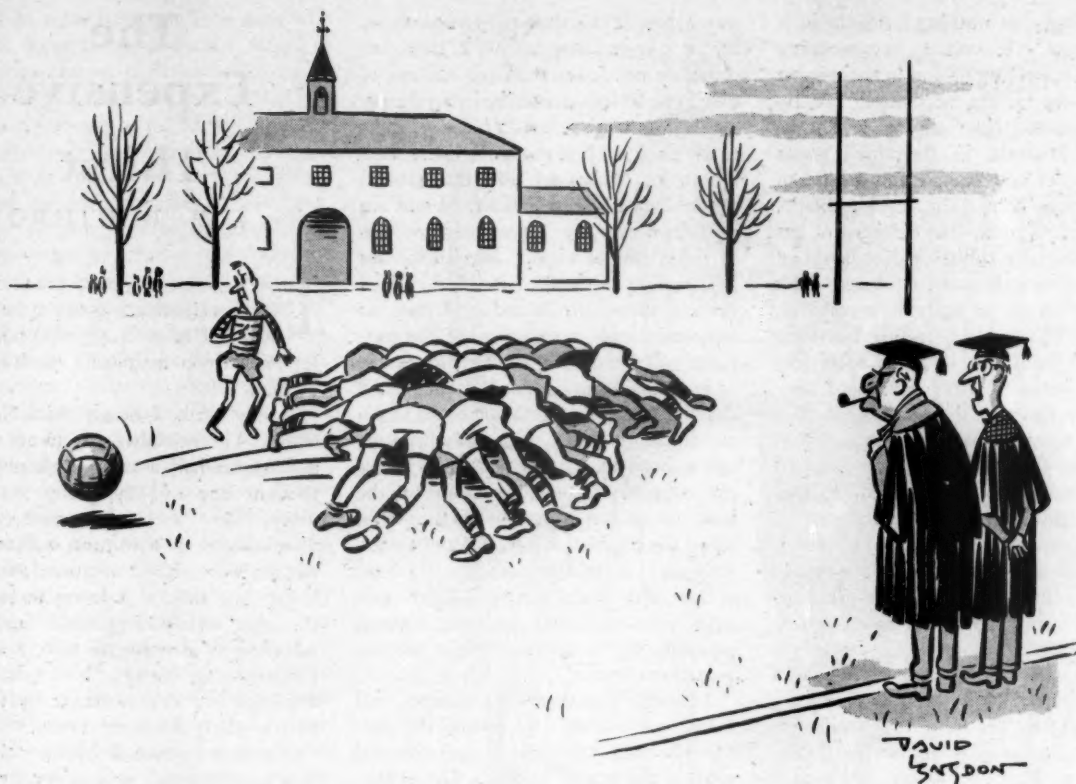
My hotel is a curious mixture of luxury and Victorian slum. The bathroom has stereophonic radio but no earth for the closet; the hangers in the wardrobe are of opalescent plastic but the shoe trees are primitive; the bureau is bursting with notepaper and envelopes but there are no stamps. And so on.

It will be good to be home again. Copy ends.

Man in Apron by

Larry





"There's still an active resistance group against our switch to rugger."

Wait for It

By H. F. ELLIS

THE window-cleaner is the real expert. His special viewpoint gives him opportunities denied to the rest of us, who have to rely on newspaper statistics and the personal experiences of friends, and he tells me that he never saw the like. (I think, as a matter of fact, that he must have seen something very like the like, if not more so, when Asian 'flu was at its peak, but if so he has forgotten it.) He says that one house up the road yesterday, or was it Wednesday, the whole lot were down with it. The old chap, Mrs., daughter, housekeeper, and gardener—the lot. I did not know the neighbourhood went as far up the scale as living-in gardeners, but that is what he seemed to imply. "Every window, upstairs, there was one of 'em," he said. "Great tousled hummocks, you know, with the sheets all anyhow. Like a string of seals on an icefloe," he said, with the gift for rich simile that T.V. brings to every home,

"and never a good-morning out of one of them. Still, there it is. You've got to expect it, the winter we've had."

Certainly one has got to expect it. The expectation is the worst part of it, as those who have not yet had it know. Those who actually have it now will not agree with this proposition, nor will those who are still in the throes of post-'flu depression, but that is because they have forgotten, with the selfishness that is so characteristic of illness, what it was like not even to have started. They do not recall the misery of total uncertainty, the need for constant wood-touching, the ever-present dread that because something pleasant is fixed for Saturday, shivering will start on Friday night. Lying in bed, complaining childishly of a few aches, they utterly fail to relish as they should the relief of knowing beyond all doubt that Saturday's engagement is off. When a man has 'flu he does not want to do

anything on Saturday; but this, the great blessing of illness, is by no means appreciated at its true worth by the sufferers with whom I have come in contact. They have a genius for refusing to be comforted. Even when up and about again and able to make plans for the future with confidence, they continue to demand sympathy for their melancholia and a feeling of woolliness in the head—though this after-malaise can very easily be cured, as I am constantly reading out to them from the medical parts of my newspaper, by a cruise, or a facial, or a glass or two of champagne.

No sympathy whatever is extended to those unfortunates who sit expecting, hour by hour, the onset of the first symptoms. Never yet, in all these weary days of waiting, has anyone spared so much as a "Bad luck" in answer to my repeated assertions that I am all right so far. I roll my eyes to the left and I roll them to the right, seeking a clue. If I turn them very suddenly upwards and, as it were, outwards, I sometimes

get a twinge, but nothing has come of it up to now. I evaluate my morning headaches, striving to find in them some nuance not to be accounted for by run-of-the-mill late nights and eye-strain. I awake in the small hours conscious of an icy chill and a kind of nagging ache behind the shoulder blade, only to find that the eiderdown has fallen off and a rolled-up handkerchief worked its way beneath my back. Half a dozen times at least a wonderful, relaxing "This is it" feeling has been snatched from me, in some such way as this, before I have even had time to reach for the thermometer. And nobody cares. Nobody troubles to say a word to the man who has not had it yet—unless it be to advise him to take some footling precaution.

I will not take precautions. I will not be turned by well-meaning busybodies into a muffled-up valetudinarian, constantly rinsing my throat and building up my reserves of vitamin C. I prefer to face this thing four-square, just as I am, unsmirched by twentieth-century prophylactics, me and my antibodies together against the unnumbered battalions of Type B. Even now, as I sit here indomitably writing when

to-morrow at this time my temperature, for all I know, may be 101.2, there are probably not fewer than ten million of this Type B virus clustering in my throat. To tell the truth it feels a bit sore, right at the back, at this moment, but I shall ignore it. It has felt like that several times since Monday and here I still am as well as ever, bar an anxiety-neurosis of international class. My antibodies are dealing with the situation. If I drench them all, friend and foe, in antiseptic, who is to say what the outcome will be? When I finally go down, as go I shall, may it not be that I shall succumb to a huge moustachioed strain of antiseptic-proof, antibody-immune virus, bred by my own folly in taking precautions? I shall do nothing of the kind. I do not want my 'flu in April, when the blossom is out. I want it now. At once. A mild attack, which I shall endure with all the patient fortitude of a man who has been preparing himself mentally for it day and night for the past three weeks.

I thought just then for a moment that I had got it now. By rolling the eyes *inwards* and upwards I experienced quite a sharp stab of pain. Diagnostic, I should have said it was. But every time I repeat the manoeuvre the reaction is less acute. At the twelfth attempt I appear to be almost entirely free from fever. Is it possible that I have stumbled by chance on a cure for influenza, instantaneous in its effect? "Just roll the eyes upwards and inwards—no, no, *inwards*—that's it. Keep on doing that and you'll find that all those incipient aches and pains vanish as if by magic. I know, but there it is, old boy. *It works.*"

I shall get the window-cleaner to try it next time he calls—preferably when he is staring through my upstairs window and deciding I look like a seal on an icefloe. With any luck it might make him fall off his ladder.

The Expensive Thirst

By J. B. BOOTHROYD

I SEE from a gossip-column that some celebrity I'd never heard of has just taken a £30,000 house in Jersey "which includes a push-button cocktail bar."

I only wish I could think how it works. These gossip columns are always giving you half a tale. I should have thought any self-respecting journalist would have seen that once you've mentioned a push-button cocktail bar the reader's interest is riveted; to leave it flat, like that, and go on to say that the chap in whose £30,000 house it's included is planning to start a lobster business can scarcely be regarded as anything but anti-climactic by anyone with a good dictionary handy.

Someone I spoke to said they thought this push-button bar was simply a bar that came out of the wall when you pushed a button—rather like a mechanized Jeeves. I prefer to think on more extravagant lines. After all, when you've pushed the button and the bar's out that's more or less the end of the excitement for the guests—unless you've had to kick it a bit and break a few finger-nails scrabbling at the place where it ought to come out and won't. What has a bar that comes out of the wall got that a bar that's out already hasn't? You still have the drinks to mix.

I prefer to think that this bar mixes them.

My own drink arrangements at home, when I think of them, make me very envious of this bar, when I think of that. All my drinks are in the bottom of the sideboard, and I can't get at them until I've moved the fattest guest out of the chair I've just put him in, so that I can get the door open. Even then I can't see anything. My guests never know what they're getting. Worse, they never know what they've had.

I can see that on the push-button system this sort of thing couldn't happen. One button, one drink. Two for a mixture. Ice coming out of an ice-shaped hole, slices of lemon out of a



"Actually, we only want him to learn about atom peace of course."

slot. Mind you, if you're a man who prides himself on a decent range of refreshment you need an awful lot of buttons, but what the hell, when you think of the cost of a £30,000 house*, a button or two's nothing. The important thing is to ensure that each reservoir's tanked up with supplies at the time. I hear all you have to do is take the orders—once you can shout down the flood of interesting talk that beats over you every time you get out a "What'll"—and bawl out the button numbers. "Helen, for Pete's sake speak to me!" you scream, shaking a blonde until her parting shows dark—"What'll you have to drink, darleeng!" Gallantly finishing her story about having passed a man on an escalator who looked exactly like one of the Gulbenkians, except that he was wearing plumber's overalls, she eventually throws you three words, which are gin and and mixed. "Help yourself, sweetie," you cry, throwing her aside—"Buttons 1, 9 and 14." If all goes well you ought to have them all up against the bar in half an hour or so, thumbing excitedly away and giving off little cries of rapture and amusement as the exhilarating jets fly unerringly into the glasses. It might be as well to explain that the glasses have to be held in the right place.

And I'm a bit worried about the powering of this thing. Could it be hydraulic? If so, one eye on the pressure-gauge is advisable. Get a real 100 lb. to the square inch working and it doesn't matter whether the glass is in the right place or not. A shot of champagne cobbler could go in and out again without marking it, and straight up to the ceiling and down with a whra-a-ankkk! into the nearest bowl lampshade. But perhaps I'm worrying unnecessarily. It seems more likely to be worked by electricity, even in an out-of-the-way spot like Jersey. But then, again, there's always such a thing as a failure. When they cut off the current in an ordinary household like mine the worst that can happen is a spine-chilling scream from the vacuum-cleaner when it comes on again, and perhaps a bar of the electric fire slyly coming to life and melting the chromium off a tea-trolley bogie. Imagine the scene in this £30,000 (or thereabouts) house, however. The celebrated owner

* About £20,000, allowing off for gossip-columnists' inflation.



"Not only is this boy sensational, but he has fallen arches, hammer toes and an unstable personality."

has had his biggest cocktail-party frost of all time. Forty guests, and a power-failure at 6.45 prompt. The push-button cocktail-bar, as I prefer to see it for this part of my investigation, is completely incapable of being worked by hand; for the first thirty minutes the guests push their buttons like mad. Nothing. Not a sausage. Those wanting sausages hold their cupped hands in vain under the sausage-shaped hole. In the end they give up and go home, having declined their host's pressing offers of tap-water, invalid wine and other non-mechanized attractions.

Depressed, despite the fact that he has never got rid of guests in anything like the time, the frustrated fellow walks round his £30,000 grounds, sullenly kicking the first glow-worms of the damp Jersey evening, and when he

returns to the drawing-room and automatically puts out one hand for the light-switch he is cheered to find that it floods the room with light. It isn't the only flood. Obediently, in the corner, the bar is working. Over the carpet surges a thickening stream of rye whisky, rum, orange Curacao, Cointreau, vodka, applejack, green Chartreuse, grenadine, various gins and vermouths, ditto bitters and juices, Triple Sec, Swedish punch, grated nutmeg, pretzels, a selection of egg-nogs and an artillery cocktail as served at the Repulse Bay Hotel, Hongkong, China.

I hope I haven't laid it on too thick for the poor chap. In any case there's a bright side. One look round the room and he only has to lift the 'phone to be in the gossip columns again. Him and his push-button cocktail bar.

Pillory

By A. P. H.

IN this free Protestant country it is most difficult to protest against anything without arousing a storm of protest. If you take the simple but messy course of lying in the road in front of lorries you will be told "That is no way to protest. Write to your Member." If you sit still in Underground trains when they cry "All change!" they say "That is no way to protest. You should write to the management." If you say "We *have* written to the management, and we *have* written to our Member, but nothing happened," the answer is you should write to the papers. You may say then "We have been writing to the papers for years and nothing happened. Nobody seems to think we matter. Besides, if you write to the papers much you get a bad name—and sometimes they write rude things at the end in italics."

The answer then is: "Well, if you are not too busy you should go into Parliament. That is the place to get things done and that is the proper constitutional course." But even then you may be wrong. You may find that you are "splitting the vote," upsetting the statisticians, maddening the Gallup Poll, disturbing the Great Parties and interfering with the rhythmic flow of decent political life. Besides, it may cost you £150 at least.

So there must, we feel, be quite a number of "suppressed rebellions" (in the sense of "suppressed 'flu") burning in the body politic; and a fever suppressed, we know, is dangerous to contentment and the nervous system. We

therefore offer this column as a regular arena for rebels. Your moans can be about subjects great and small, "new planets," old laws, or dirty glasses. Lady Lewisham, you may remember, first made her name by complaining loudly about unclean crockery in a public place, and look at her now—a respected figure in the world of local government! There may be practices that distress you too at the food-shop, the fish-shop, the cinema, the public bar.

You will be constructive, we are sure. Perhaps one of you can suggest a remedy for the telephone habits of the big executives and their bright assistants:

SCENE: *The Garden. The aged ALBERT HADDOCK is feeding his water tortoises or watering the Morning Glories, at peace with the world. That beastly bell rings. He marches briskly into the house.*

A BRIGHT GIRL'S VOICE: Is that Lord Sole?

ALBERT HADDOCK: No, it is Mr. Haddock.

B.G.V.: I beg your pardon. It was Mr. Haddock I wanted.

A.H.: Then here he is.

B.G.V.: Is that Mr. Haddock?

A.H.: Yes.

B.G.V.: Mr. Albert Haddock?

A.H.: Yes.

B.G.V.: One moment. I have a call for you.

A.H.: I did not suppose that you wished to shave me (*but the Girl has gone*).

A.H., *for a minute or two, dozes or doodles. Sometimes if the wait is longer he may write "Act One, Scene One" and wonder how to go on. But just then:*

B.G.V. (*rather crossly*): Yes? Can I help you?

A.H.: You said you wanted me—Mr. Haddock.

B.G.V.: Oh, I am so sorry. Are you Mr. Haddock?

A.H.: Yes.

B.G.V.: Mr. Albert Haddock?

A.H.: Yes.

B.G.V.: One moment. Mr. Mumble wanted you.

A.H.: Who is Mr. Mumble? Why does he want me? How do you know—(*but long ago the GIRL, has gone.*)

A.H. *patiently doodles again. At last there is a click; the telecommunication is terminated. A.H. waits for two minutes in case Mr. Mumble is still eager for him. He then returns to the garden. Immediately the accursed bell rings again; he returns. Most of the dialogue already recorded is repeated. Then:*

B.G.V.: Mr. Albert Haddock?

A.H.: Yes. Who is Mr. Mumble and why does he want me?

B.G.V.: I am very sorry. Mr. Mumble wanted you but now he is not in his room. I am extremely sorry.

A.H.: It isn't your fault, I am sure, but who is Mr.—(*but she has gone.*)

These may be merely our own personal "hates": you will have your own.

Are you unutterably content with the condition of the railways and other public services which now belong to you? Could it be possible that you have met with unduly abrupt behaviour, rude replies, demands, duns, inhuman notices in red? How do you feel about all these forms? Are there certain questions which you decline to answer? Do you sometimes give fanciful answers—and does anything happen? What practical action do you suggest against the manifold pricks and goads of Passports? Do you resent your nice clean passport being covered with ridiculous stamps by rows of unnecessary men? Have you ever said "Hey! leave my passport alone?" What happened? If not, will you try? Do you feel, perhaps, that the self-employed person is intolerably treated? Give examples. Which are your favourite enemies on the roads? Do you sometimes take the number of the car? If so, do you ever do anything about it? Which laws would you like to see (a) passed, (b) repealed, (c) burned? Which taxes would you abolish first? What phrases, habits, customs, madden you most? What would you do about Parliament? Do you care for (a) the L.C.C., (b) the B.B.C., (c) the M.C.C.? Why not?

But mind, children; your moans must be those of what the lawyers call "a reasonable man"; and, like a Member of Parliament asking a question, you must be sure about any facts that you mention.

Carry on.



ANTI-UGLIES

Some highlights of architecture

THAT Angry Young Architect, WRIGHT,
built a skyscraper six miles in height.

Then he got on the blower
to MIES VAN DER ROHE
and sneered: "Is the Summit in sight?"

Sighed JOHN NASH to DECIMUS BURTON
"Fashions change, but of one thing I'm certain:
Our classical terraces
will be treated as heresies
e'er the stucco's had time to get dirt on."

With top hat and cigar, what a swell
was ISAMBARD KINGDOM BRUNEL.
Having laid the Great Western
regardless he pressed on
and launched the Great Eastern as well.

"To save our Cathedrals," said WYATT,
"there's nothing I won't have a try at;
from Durham to Sarum
no horrors I'll spare 'em.
'*Ruat tectum, justitia fiat*'."

That sober Tractarian, FERREY,
spent an evening with TITE and got merry.
Next morning the squinches
were out by three inches
while the spire looked decidedly jerry.

The churches of J. SOMERS CLARK
fell (aesthetically) wide of the mark.

In fact LEONARD STOKES,
making one of his jokes,
said "They look at their best after dark."

"Let it rain, let it snow," chuckled GOLDIE,
"I don't care if the brick's going mouldy.

Let the smoggy air smirch
every bit of my church
then the experts will think it's an 'oldie.'"

"By GEORGE," cried Sir ERNEST to PETO,
as he tore off a strip of sgraffito,

"I like EYCK, and your Flemish
seems quite without blemish.
Now Gothic's a style that I veto."

The stately old Duke did a slow burn
when the last guest departed from Woburn.

"Still, 'e's took quite a bit," coughed
the butler to FLITCROFT,
"and 'e 'adn't no Zoo back in Holborn."

Said STUART to NICKY REVETT
"How classically Greek can we get?"
"Our columns 'in antis'
should please dilettantes—
and also they'll keep out the wet."

"Why, man," chortled TREADWELL to MARTIN,
"dig this crazy new style that I'm startin';
it's a real cool art-nouveau
that's right in the groove! Oh
how RUSKIN—that square—will be smartin'."

P. E. C.



THE CATHERINE SQUEAL

Should Danish architects be allowed to design Oxford colleges?

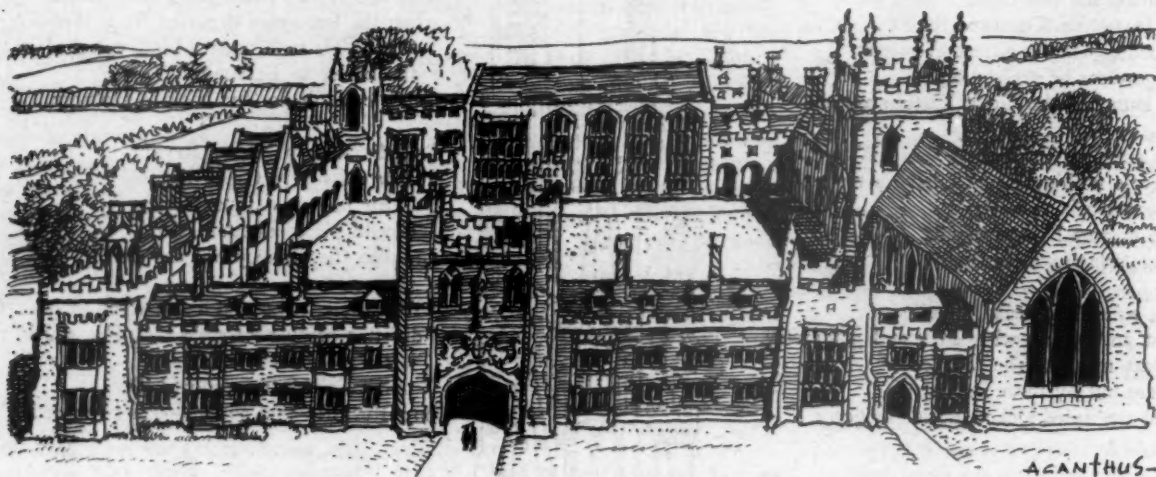
THE idea of inviting Professor Arne Jacobsen to design the new buildings for St. Catherine's College, says a letter in *The Times*, is "the greatest slap in the face delivered to English architects since the Frenchman William of Sens was brought in to rebuild the choir of Canterbury Cathedral." Apart from the fact that this seems to me rather capriciously to

landed at Dover with all his newfangled Frenchified notions of how to build cathedrals. I think that once the language difficulty was solved they got together in corners and swapped ideas like mad.

And yet it seems, from the relative strength of the pros and antis in *The Times* correspondence, that to-day the majority of the architect's profession

say anything about the Oxford project, but was delighted by the letters in *The Times*. "I am glad they do not want it," he said, taking from his mouth the pipe without which he is apparently never photographed and seldom seen, "and I am glad they want it. It is good that there should be so much interest."

Arne Jacobsen is a small man in the middle fifties, with the face of a retired



Rejected designs for St. Catherine's: 1, "Trad" or Neo-University

ignore the slap delivered when the Scotsman Basil Spence of Edinburgh was brought in to rebuild Coventry Cathedral; I am not sure that it is a very sound sentiment, even though half a dozen other letters to *The Times* back it up.

Architecture, as architects are only too ready to point out at the drop of a theodolite, is an art, and art, as any artist will tell you, is international. Mr. Augustus John does not think it a slap in the face when the Tate buys a Picasso. Mr. Britten is not affronted when the B.B.C. performs a new cantata by Stravinsky, nor Sir Malcolm if they get Ansermet to conduct it. I don't know who the leading English architects were in 1175, but I bet they didn't boycott William of Sens when he

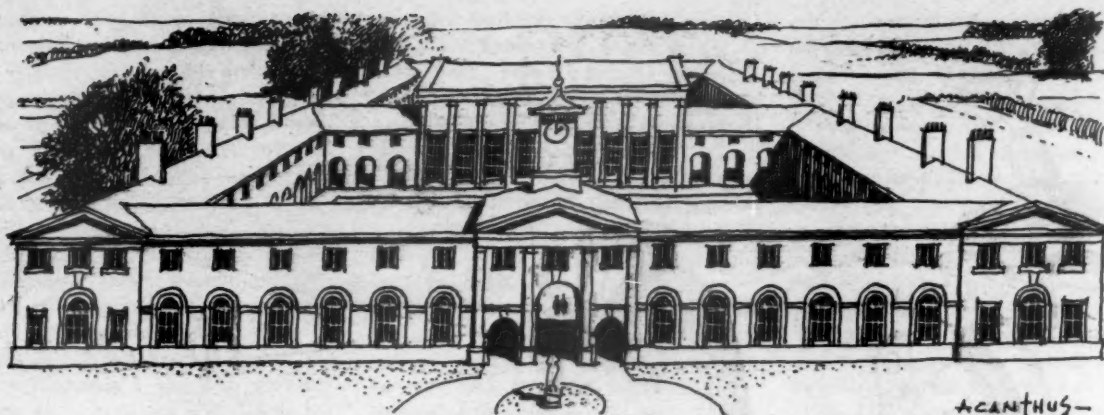
are against letting Professor Jacobsen build here. Perhaps architecture must be distinguished from pictures and music because it is so permanent. You can always ship a Picasso back to France, but once you have an Oxford college built it stays in Oxford until it falls down, or is pulled down, or is destroyed by a nuclear device. You may admire foreign architecture as much as you like in the pages of the *Architectural Review*, but you mustn't actually have it on your doorstep; it might be hard to get rid of.

And what does Professor Jacobsen think of all this?

Cornered in the RIBA building as he was putting the finishing touches to his exhibition—the first one-man exhibition ever to be held there—he declined to

Viking and a generous allowance of that cosy charm that seems to be the perquisite of all Danes. He speaks fluent English with a rumbling Danish accent, but takes refuge in an interpreter for anything complicated. Trying to trick him into talking about St. Catherine's, I asked him if he thought it was ever permissible to design a building in the style of a past age in order that it should harmonize with its surroundings. "That I won't do!" he said emphatically; and then, interpreted, "A new building can be made to harmonize with older buildings if you use the same materials and keep to the same general proportions."

He is a firm Anglophile, and sees nothing to be ashamed of in British postwar educational building, in spite



Rejected designs for St. Catherine's : 2, "Mainstream" or Neo-Tech

of the pleas of poverty put up by those responsible for it (or disappointed at not being responsible for it.) In the gracious little speech which he made at the opening of his exhibition, he singled out for special praise among recent British architectural achievements "those excellent new schools." At our earlier meeting he expressed his regret at having so little time during his visit to look at modern British buildings; "but I am familiar with them from journals," he told me, "and some of them are very fine."

"The best thing I have seen in London," he said, "is Bedford Square." Honesty compelled him to qualify this judgment. "You may say that I have not seen very much in London, but I

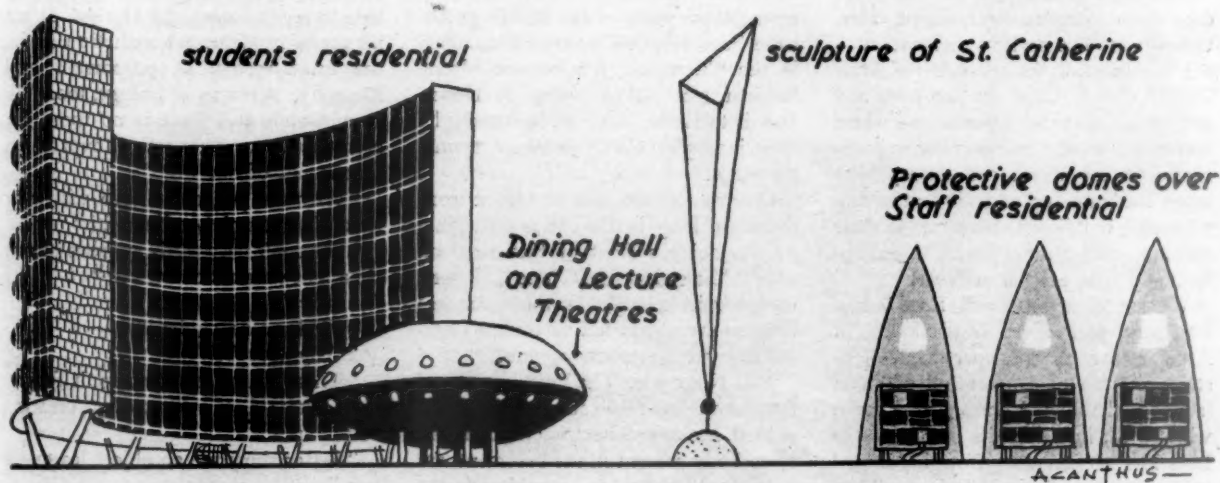
was told about this, and I made a special journey. It is very fine."

Most of Professor Jacobsen's work has been done in Denmark (though he designed a factory for Massey-Harris in Canada and won a Prize of Honour with it at an international exhibition—how many Canadian architects are there?); but the exhibition at the RIBA building at 66 Portland Place gives an idea of the scope of his imagination, not only as an architect but also as a designer of furniture, textiles and cutlery. His buildings are simple, plain and functional, and yet curiously sympathetic. His dwelling-houses are homely, his Munkegaards School gay and enjoyable. His textiles range from the geometrical to the almost sentimentally pretty. His

chairs are extremely comfortable. Of his stainless steel spoons I prefer not to speak.

What kind of a college he would produce for St. Catherine's it is hard to say, except that it would be distinguished and uncompromising. Not even those who carp at his selection can deny him a place among the great architects. His more recent designs seem to tend towards increasing simplicity; the Rødovre Town Hall of 1956 and the Copenhagen air terminal, still not completed, are inflexibly rectangular. It would probably do Oxford a power of good to have something so honest and "contemporary" in its midst.

— B. A. YOUNG



Rejected designs for St. Catherine's : 3, "Progressive" or Neo-post-Bauhaus



"BOO!"

Architecture Considered as One of the Fine Arts

By CHARLES REID

APONY tail or two, duffels and turtle necks, one pipe-smoking type in a sealskin cap like a sea captain out of Strindberg, and a ring of youthful eyes. Some of the eyes were cagy in the presence of a quizzing elder. Others were live coals of indignation.

I was meeting the executive of Anti-Ugly Action. These are the boys and girls who hold mock funerals and wheel themselves around sardonically in bath-chairs, crying death and decrepitude, when the founding stone is laid of any whopping building which is not, in their opinion, well proportioned, humbug-free, and (yes, yes!) of our time.

We sat in a Cromwell Road semi-basement, part of the Royal College of Art's stained-glass department. Upstairs, on top of a chest full of cullet (stained glass fragments), sat a coffin with R.I.P. in gilt on its lid. This the boys knocked together from hardboard at twenty-four hours' notice. They used it for mourning rites on the

Lombard Street site of a loathed Barclays Bank project. A broom-cupboard housed A.U.A. slogans mounted on poles—Fake Buildings Are a Sin, Seventeenth-Century is Ridiculous in the Twentieth, Renaissance Means Rebirth Not Rehash, Pull It Down, Unfair to Wren, What a Monstrosity!

Stained glass exercises leaned against the walls.

One young man said he was at work on a Mocking of Christ; another that he was doing a Rout of San Romano after "Mister Uccello." The "Mister" drew admiring laughs. Perhaps that was because everybody felt nervous.

"Any architects among you?"

No. Not a one. The Royal College of Art, where this to-do about architecture started, has *no* architectural department. Everybody present in the basement was a stained glass or graphic design student.

"But one hundred and fifty architectural students in other schools are among our three hundred followers. In any case we don't have to be trained architects. It isn't a matter of being able to recite Ionics and Dorics. It's a matter of fundamental æsthetic theory, the basic system of proportion and harmony. A matter of *linkage*, too. We unanimously feel there is no room for architectural or other artistic expression that is not of our time."

"Why are you so in love with our time? What's so hot about it?"

"We don't necessarily approve of our time, but we *must* express it?"

"Why?"

"We have no choice."

"Why not rebel?"

"These things interact, don't forget. You create better times by creating better art."

"Better show me an object lesson or two."

Four of us piled into a taxi. My three

companions were Bryan Newman (22) chairman, Kenneth Baynes (24) secretary and William Wilkins (20) press officer and treasurer of the Anti-Uglies.

Among the towering Hallfield tenements, Paddington, I cricked my neck while the three explained to me how ravishing it all was.

"Those balconies," said Wilkins, "are balconies, not little platforms with iron railings. Look at the sculpturesque quality of the façades. Gives me a lift every time I see them."

"And," put in Baynes, "note the sense of materials, the different surfacings, the logical yet lyrical way the fronts are divided up."

And the rust scabs on the iron balustrade? And the soot-slavers on the concrete below? And the blue balcony paint that was flaking off so squalidly? Write me off as a giggling layman if you will. It occurred to me we had better seek another lay view.

A taxi-driver tenant, married, three children, came to his door. Apart (he said) from an earwig plague bred by the palings which were put up to keep children off every blade of Hallfield grass, their flat was a dream after what they once had to put up with (shared lavatory and overhead dins included). But when it came to looks, give him those terraces in Regent's Park (Nash terraces, weren't they called?) which always tempted him to stop his taxi for a good long stare.

Next object lesson: new Bank of England block behind St. Paul's Cathedral.

Watched with hard-eyed detachment by porters in dust-pink cutaway coats and gold braided top hats, Newman, Baynes and Wilkins stood and hated. Watery sunshine caught bits of façade sculpture. There were ships and dolphins, a girl with flying hair and a temple in her lap, two lions talking to each other out of their mouth-corners, and an armoured knight spearing a dragon while undoing his back collar-stud.

Newman: Most hideous façade I ever saw. Those bits of sculpture dotted about are absolutely feeble. They don't add up to anything. They don't achieve anything.

Wilkins: Glued on.

Newman: Sheer monotony of the whole thing...

Baynes: Looks as if it's built out

of plastic building blocks for children. Just a box for putting people in.

Wilkins: Those ludicrous cornices! Those out-of-scale columns! Those brick fluffs, mock keystones or whatever they are!

Eight men in blue livery jackets started going round the grey granite string course with pails of hot water and polishing cloths. "Must keep her beautiful," winked one of them.

With a snort my Anti-Uglies sped me to the Golden Lane estate.

A sixteen-storey tower packed with families and nattily prinked out in rectangles of daffodil and grey sprang to the sky on the edge of the city's widest bomb-site. Wings spread mystifyingly from the top of it. A man bundling pound notes in the rent office, where tendrils grew up glazed black masonry, said the wings were full of water. My trio brooded pleasurably on nearly everything.

Some of the subordinate blocks, found Wilkins, had their colour schemes (grey-red, grey-blue and so on) messed up by the tenants' window curtains. These were of anarchic variety. I had noticed similar jumbles at Paddington.

Nor was this all. At certain of the widows collarless fathers and housewives in headwraps actually *showed themselves*. They did not harmonize at all. What is the City Corporation doing about this? Tenants who, by looking

out of their parlour windows in broad daylight, mar the æsthetic integrity of a façade might be bastinadoed on the steps of the Royal Exchange.

Two women, one old, the other middle-aged, skirted rectangles of rather dirty ornamental water in the main quadrangle.

"How do you like the *look* of the flats—the proportions, the harmonies, the integrations?" asked one of my trio hopefully.

"Too many squares," said the middle-aged woman promptly. "Why couldn't they have given us some curves?"

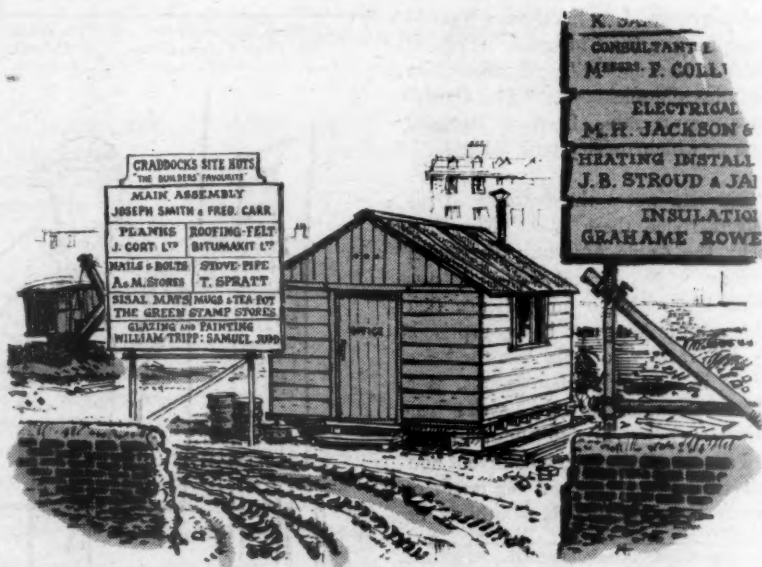
The old woman, an Italian, smiled sadly and said "If it was in France there would be curves. Curves, the French understand them. Not the English."

One of the Anti-Uglies' aims is to rouse and arm mass opinion in support of their likes and dislikes. They'll not find it easy.

☆

"Wearing a borrowed toga and my own chukka boots, I walked bravely into Mayfair's Satire Club last night to come face to face with—an elephant... Co-host Dr. Ivan Story, a consultant psychiatrist who owns the club, beamed under his laurel wreath: 'The theme of this party is Rome. And Romans *always* had elephants at their parties...'"—*Daily Herald*

How about consultant psychiatrists?



Where Are They Now?

By R. G. G. PRICE

Newspaper diarists, when up-to-the-minute gossip is thin, like to pick up last year's, or even remoter, celebrities and throw a gleam of light on their present condition. But what of those ageless, ever memorable celebrities we get to know so well in fiction . . . ?

SWITCHING the spotlight from the up-and-coming to the long-since-arrived, this columnist reports first on Mr. Machin¹, "Denry" to his friends, and the most lavish party-giver since Sardanapalus. Even in the darkest days of World War II he seemed able to conjure caviar and champagne, if not out of thin air out of a fat wallet. Quick-talking as ever, he uses a cosmopolitan accent in place of the old Scottish one, especially since his fourth marriage to the widow of a casino-owning Greek millionaire. Mr. Machin slices his time up between his Caribbean island chain, his village in the south of France and his Park Lane penthouse. His visits to London have to be carefully rationed to get the full tax-advantage from his Panamanian nationality. He keeps in touch with his electronic, plastic and property interests by an elaborate radio link, claims to be able to contact any executive from the bottom of his swimming-pool in three minutes. Mr. Machin has been a generous benefactor to the little Hebridean island from which the Machins come. Last handout, a Nurses' Home for the local hospital. (Pop. of island at census: 147.) I asked him about his old nickname, "The Card." Dates, apparently, from a baccarat game at which royalty took a hand.

"No one wears the bottoms of his trousers rolled these days," Mr. Prufrock², the Anglo-American dictator of fashions cultural and sartorial, was saying last night to an audience that seemed quite happy to be unsurprised. Mr. Prufrock, who looks just the same age as in his early photographs, is a gallant defender of the *status quo* against such hot-headed innovators as the Papacy and the men who invent new male silhouettes. He was the terror of Boston hostesses in his youth as he

stood against the wall and looked disapproving. He approves now all right.

Lady Metroland³, who seems to keep the title despite changes of husband, manages to stay ahead of the game in both society and finance. Her parties are still a crush of politicians, artists, religious leaders and very big business. She is a company, she told me last night, and has no income of her own except a managerial salary of £400 a year—"All my contemporaries are dead or nuns or married to ambassadors, so I turned to money for company." At the moment she is stocking a nature reserve in Northumberland with wolves.

The Bishop of Huddersfield⁴ was telling me at lunch that he was a school-master as a young man and for a time joined a concert party. He found the practice in seizing attention invaluable. Having expertly seized my attention he said that he had always followed the beckoning of new experience. Dr. Jollifant is, though he did not say so, in the running for the next vacancy at

York. He does not often see any of the good companions with whom he once took curtains, apart from Lord Oakroyd, T.U.C. elder statesman and ex-P.M.G.

In London for a long week-end, Mr. Babbitt⁵, still euphoric and emphatic. Here for a Convention of the Brotherhood of Tabernacles, European Chantry. Still keeps an active interest in everything going on, especially in his own State. Thinks the great danger to-day is ill-informed criticism of Business. Campaigns keenly for Anti-Subversion Bill. I still have the cigar he gave me last night.

Sir Eugene Marjoribanks⁶, head of the world-wide firm of manuscript auctioneers, is off to spend his usual winter in Madeira. When I asked him how he could bear to handle so many remains of poets without trying poetry himself, he confessed that as a young man he had had ambitions that way. He brings the shrewdness he shows in business into the charitable field, has lent his name to the Committee of Morell House, the Mission which keeps alive the name of Lady Marjoribanks' first husband.

Lord Mellors⁷, one of the latest batch of Life Peers, was once a protégé of Sir Clifford Chatterley, who backed his political début. He stands about as far to the Right as a Labour Member can.

⁵ Babbitt. Sinclair Lewis.

⁶ Candida. Bernard Shaw.

⁷ Lady Chatterley's Lover. D. H. Lawrence.

³ Decline and Fall, etc. Evelyn Waugh.

⁴ The Good Companions. J. B. Priestley.



¹ The Card. Arnold Bennett.

² The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock. T. S. Eliot.

When he was at the Home Office he was always falling foul of his back benchers, who found him much too tough on obscene publications. When he was in Opposition his attacks on moral laxity in the Women's Services led to a breach with his Party. I asked him last night whether he thought he was going to find more support in the Lords. In his usual grim tone, he said an ex-game-keeper's views on poaching ought to win him the ear of the House.

That forthright champion of a White Africa, Captain "Hughie" Drummond⁸, known to the dwindling number of his contemporaries as "Bulldog," is here on a holiday from Kenya. He seems to dislike everything and everybody except Mr. James Bond, whom he calls "a very sound egg about Commies." He never tires of listening to reminiscences of interrogations Mr. Bond has conducted or endured.

Lord Forsyte⁹, the Chairman of the mammoth Investment Corporation, flew in from Alberta, where he had been inspecting the oilfields that the vast Forsyte interests have been developing jointly with a consortium of U.S. merchant bankers. Lord Forsyte, who collects modern architecture, inherits financial flair and connoisseurship from father Jolyon II. His mother's first husband was Soames Forsyte, collector of art and other securities. During World War II Lord Forsyte held key post of Adviser at the Treasury. At one time the Forsyte holdings were pretty widely distributed through the wildly ramifying family; but Lord Forsyte has managed to unite most of them in the senior branch. His last benefaction was a School of Taxation for London University.

Sir Denis Phipps¹⁰ looks so suave, subtle and scholarly that it has always puzzled me how he got on so well at the Washington Embassy. Even the crudest Congressman fed out of his delicate hand. When I tackled him last night he put it down to a holiday he spent as a young man on the island of Nepenthe. In a culturally and racially mixed society, under the influence of a south wind to which he attributes most of his education, he became tolerant, supple

⁸ Bulldog Drummond. "Sapper."

⁹ The Forsyte Saga. John Galsworthy.

¹⁰ South Wind. Norman Douglas.



and comprehending. Always ready to analyse himself frankly for the benefit of his companions, Sir Denis spends a good deal of time at his old college.

Canon Bunter¹¹ is an impressive sight in his own portable pulpit. Yesterday he was preaching the annual Self-Denial sermon before the Worshipful Company of Meat-dressers. He distinguished between lax self-denial, in which the first temptation that assaults the penitent is resisted, and thoughtful self-denial. He himself had the intention of renouncing health-giving foods during Lent. Gourmet and expert on vintages, Canon Bunter is

¹¹ Innumerable Greyfriars stories. Frank Richards.

Appeals Secretary of several diocesan charities.

Mr. Philip Trent¹², the Arts Council's Director of Detection, seems anxious to contact Private Detectives not so far included in the Council's subsidy scheme. Meagre Treasury grants make keeping this aspect of the British genius alive increasingly hard. Detection could rate no more impressive champion than Mr. Trent, who has made his mark in painting, the higher journalism, detection itself, the B.B.C., the Foreign Office and the British Council. He is busying himself at present with the Exhibition of Victorian Toxicology that opens at Sheffield next month.

¹² Trent's Last Case, etc. E. C. Bentley.

Toby Competitions

No. 58—A Young Man's Fancy

WRITE a love letter, or a proposal of marriage, from a Civil Servant, lawyer or advertising copy-writer who cannot escape from his idiom. Limit: 120 words.

A prize consisting of a framed *Punch* original, to be selected from all available drawings, is offered for the best entry. Runners-up will receive a book token to the value of one guinea. Entries by first post on Friday, March 13, to TOBY COMPETITION No. 58, *Punch*, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

Report on Competition No. 55

(*Oh! I Am a, etc.*)

Occupational ballads in a modern setting provided a large and rewarding entry. Judging was tricky. Many neat lyrics did not quite give the picture, essential to this sort of song, of the man up there on the platform singing it, glorying in or sighing over his task. Catching the ring of the ballad was more important than adroit versification. Parodies of existing models were rather too frequent, though many had merit. And not many echoed the characteristic exclamations and word-inversions; one started perfectly but tailed off—"When first I went to politics, to politics did go." In a very close finish first prize went, almost, one might say, after a recount, and mainly on account of his really authentic easily imagined sound effects of a deep bass rolling it out, to:

C. J. BARTLETT
33 WESTON ROAD
SMETHWICK
STAFFS.

I am a jolly bummaree,
And work for all who pay my fee,
Aye, work for all who pay my fee.
I carry meat from here to there,
To let it fall I do not dare,
I do not dare.
The sides of beef ne'er come to grief,
With legs of veal I rightly deal,
Of legs of lamb I bearer am,
To tails of ox I give no shocks,
I know my job from A to Z,
And as I work I use my head,
Aye, as I work I use my head.

This was a close runner-up:

Now some men go to sea—ho, ho!
And some work on the land,
But I've a job that—s'welp me bob!—
You'll never understand.

CHORUS:
For I am an average adjuster
And nobody knows what I do.
Do I add one here, subtract one there,
To make the sum come true?
Now that's a secret I won't tell,
For if I did I know full well.
Any Tom or Dick who had the trick
Could adjust an average too.

Alfred Rhodes, 23 Hillside Drive, Port Glasgow



A near miss for the first:

THE SUSSEX PILGRIMS' SONG

As me and my companions were waiting at Waterloo
Quite over-dressed in our evening best and at only a quarter to two,
Then Mr. Christie thinks our tails help make the atmosphere,
Oh, it's my delight on a Glyndebourne night at the season of the year.

Success to every picnicker who dines beside the lake,
Success to each production whether Falstaff, Flute, or Rake,
When late at night we leave, perhaps, with Mozart in our car,
Oh, it's my determina-ti-on to come again next year.

John D. Austin, The Gate House, Merevale, Atherton, Warwickshire

This, too, has the right tang:

THE SONG OF THE CUSTOMS MAN

Oh, the customs shed is the life for me,
The feel of chalk and the smell of the sea,
The challenge thrown, the sudden attack,
The battle of wits, the last "Unpack!"
The loot revealed, the duty clear—
Collect the spoil as he pays dear.

CHORUS:

What ho! What ho!
As down the trunk we go.
A bottle of rum or a brandy—o!
Yo-ho, ho-ho, ho-ho!

Mrs. J. Wates, Coombe Langly, Kingston Hill, Surrey

A nice twist, if not pedantically in the spirit of the game:

The joiner, the plumber, the butcher, the cook;
They come from the printer distilled in a book.

I Do It Myself
Making cupboard and shelf
From drawings they print in the Weekly.
I mend broken panes
I disinfect drains
And nail bits of parquet obliquely.
Although I abhor
Getting down on the floor
To sandpaper bumps that are rougher,
I stick coloured tiling,
Ecstatically smiling,
Like the girl on the magazine cover.

The cobbler, the ploughman, and Jack on the sea,
I sing them no longer, they're all made of me.

Stephen Sweet, 4 Balgillo Road, Broughty Ferry, Dundee

Some of the others were a shade slick for this particular purpose, though enjoyable in their own right:

The atomic reactor is my benefactor,
I peddle a nuclear pill,
The products of fission provide my commission,
I sell a sure cure for each ill.

CHORUS:

Oh! I am a pedlar, an erudite pedlar,
I peddle my wares with great skill.
My knowledge scholastic and conscience elastic
Result in a fabulous bill.

R. E. Ansell, 22 Sharmans Cross Road, Solihull, Warwickshire

She's Winifred of Winfrith Heath,
A primary heat-exchanger;
Whenever she goes critical
The boffins sense the danger.
Her food is cooked uranium rods,
Her drink is heavy water;
She is the darling of the gods,
Black Pluto's favourite daughter!

Commander R. T. Bower, R.N., Carlton Club, S.W.1

Book tokens, in addition, to: Roger Whiteway, Emmanuel College, Cambridge; Mrs. Dorothy Cook, 18 Raymond Road, Wimbledon, S.W.19; Brigadier E. E. Nott-Bower, Holyford Close, Colyford, Devon; Mrs. P. C. Stephens, 16 Marryat Road, S.W.19; J. L. Paisley, 8 Churchill Road, Guildford; Mrs. E. B. Ransome, Emlin Hall, Torver, Coniston, Lancs.

Essence of



Parliament

WHEN a bill is introduced under the ten-minute rule, one speech is allowed in its favour and one in opposition. Mr. Mayhew and Mr. Francis Noel-Baker arranged a pretty little comedy between them over Mr. Mayhew's bill to enforce stricter rules about advertising on Independent Television. Mr. Mayhew proposed it, and then Mr. Noel-Baker pretended to oppose it on the ground that it did not go far enough, but really made a second speech in its favour. Angry Tories who had been deprived of a chance of making a real speech against the bill muttered—those of them who ran to such ornament—into their moustaches that it was all a dirty trick. Mr. Mayhew got leave to bring in his bill all right, but its chances of getting on to the Statute Book are now much dimmer than they would otherwise have been, for in Parliamentary procedure the chances of obstruction when a gang feels that it has been tricked are infinite. If you want to get anything done it seldom pays to be clever; but on the other hand, if you know that you cannot get anything done anyway, then it is awfully boring to go on being stupid. Perhaps Mr. Mayhew and Mr. Noel-Baker just wanted to have fun. If so, so much the better, for Mr. Mayhew is not a man whom one has ever known to have fun before.

Mr. Sandys is, as Mr. Head truly said, "a tough egg." He is a hard fighter who likes to get his own way, and Mr. George Brown is not the only one to be filled with wonder that, confronted with such a trio of Service Ministers as Mr. Soames, Lord Selkirk and Mr. George Ward, his triumph has not been total. If a man cannot knock out his own brother-in-law, whom can he knock out? But Mr. Sandys, though a hard fighter, is not a lively speaker, and gives in

general an impression of almost infinite boredom with what he himself has to say. He slumped on Wednesday into a riot of mixed metaphors about missiles in his quiver and taking a niblick to get the ship straight in case he got into trouble, and at the end of it all there was no answer to the question why, as he argued, if we were never going to fight a war alone again, was there any point in having a whole assortment of weapons. There was no answer to the question, but of course the Socialist party line prevented the Socialists from asking it. Yet even if the joke creaked and groaned a bit, Mr. Sandys, to do him justice, did make one joke. With

a great pretence of innocence he assumed that Mr. Swinger must be an obedient disciple of his own proclaimed Socialist party policy and therefore agree with Mr. Sandys about our having the nuclear deterrent, and Mr. Swinger had not quite got the nerve to denounce his own party in answer to Mr. Sandys' challenge. So we saw the Sandys running out and the Swinger swung, and it was all quite good fun and quite well done, though he made his joke with that

pitying smile with which Mr. R. A. Butler and other grown-ups condescend to the antics of little children. Mr. George Brown, when his turn came, banged about a bit; but banging is difficult if you are leading for the Opposition and you really have nothing to say against the Minister except that you want his job in order to go on doing exactly the same as he is doing. Mr. Grimond was the only speaker who was really against our having the H-bomb, and he was against it on the ground that if the Americans—whom he called

N.A.T.O.—had it, then infinity plus one was no greater than infinity, so we might as well save the money. The House was kept together by the rumour that Mr. Head was going to speak. As Earl Attlee has been sagely explaining to America, internal party differences tend to diminish as an election approaches, and Mr. Head's differences

from his ex-colleagues were not primarily of policy so much as a difference between a man who had spent the last months thinking and those who, being in office, had not been able to afford themselves this luxury. So he explained. We were, he feared, losing the cold war in the uncommitted



Mr. George Ward

countries, and in order to win that war what we needed was not more weapons but more intelligence. The ex-Secretary for War no longer believed much, it seemed, in weapons, and in these days whenever he heard anyone speak of safety-catches he felt for his culture. It was all good news, but if only he had thought first and had Suez afterwards it would have been much better.

Admittedly it is not the prime business of a defence debate to provide a public entertainment. Yet there is no reason why they should be quite as dull as they are. On Thursday Mr. Aubrey Jones had facts and figures, but he produced them in such a way that heads inevitably drooped. Mr. Shinwell started off as if he was going to be lively, but he ended by being merely incoherent. He said that the debates as they are now conducted are futile, as indeed they are, but his suggestion that instead the Minister of Defence should gather Members of all parties in his private room to give them confidential information was hardly a comfortable solution. All too much goes on behind closed doors as it is.

— PERCY SOMERSET



Mr. Christopher Mayhew

FOR WOMEN



AT the first prick of the sore throat which I knew presaged influenza I decided that I must, this time, be ready for it. Usually I totter up and get down stairs, fetching and carrying and sending up my temperature. Morning and evening my husband comes to the rescue; he knows how to make tea and boil eggs.

I got out the car. Aspirin was the first necessity but, waiting among the coughing and sneezing customers, I saw that I must also buy gargle, vitamin tablets, glucose, cough mixture, a sedative and a bottle of tonic. Next, as I knew that at any moment my knees might buckle under me, I went to the Supermarket where I could buy everything else under one roof. With one of their perambulator arrangements I went into action, piling in bottles of lime juice and orange squash, tins of fruit juice, two dozen oranges, six lemons, three pounds of butter, three dozen eggs, four pounds of assorted biscuits, a slab of plain chocolate, soap, paper handkerchiefs, disinfectant and a large melon (which I might fancy during convalescence).

With another trolley I hurried back to the Deep Freeze. This was really for my husband's benefit, but I too might be able to eat a few mouthfuls of chicken by to-morrow. The third trolley was largely devoted to soup. Whenever I am really ill, soup is one of the few things I can enjoy. But my taste is capricious, and if, for instance, I am offered mushroom I long for oxtail. This time there would be no such difficulty. By now I was feeling dizzy, but when the manager and a well-disposed customer had loaded most of my provisions into the boot and stacked the remainder on the back seat I had just sufficient energy left to call

at the newsagent's for all the new magazines.

Unloading at home was exhausting for someone in the early stages of influenza, but I was buoyed up by the comforting thought that once in bed I could remain there.

I took all my purchases upstairs and piled as much as I could on to my chest of drawers. Then I cleared all inessentials out

and put them into my husband's dressing-room as I needed the space for china, glass, cutlery, teapot and medicines. Even so, most of it had to stand on the floor. By this time I was feeling pretty tired and ill, but one of the tins of soup, some glucose and aspirin revived me enough to move all my husband's belongings into the spare bedroom and make up the bed.

I made a good selection of books and packed them neatly along both windowsills and then made room for writing paper, pen, pencil, stamps, postcards, telephone directory, address book, waste-paper basket, kettle, two saucepans, a packet of detergent, the dish cloth and a tea towel. I fixed a suction hanger to hang up my drip-dry nightgown.

I knew that the doctor was worked to death, so I put off calling him until to-morrow; but as he would arrive after my husband had left to catch his train I tied a long length of string to the spare latch-key; my bedroom window is, fortunately, almost directly over the front door. This also provided the solution to the problem of collecting the milk and bread. I tied a rope to the handle of my shopping basket and practised hauling it up and letting it down.

Filling a kettle at a wash-hand basin is always unrewarding, so I detached the hosepipe from my washing machine and placed that with the rest of the equipment. At the last moment I fetched my knitting, two packs of patience cards, an electric torch and a drawing-board.

Settled in bed, with a tray of tea, two hot-water-bottles, a tin of biscuits and the thermometer, I still found strength to ring up and cancel all my engagements for the rest of the week. I was not sorry to miss the Sale of Work. By the time my husband arrived home I was comparatively cheerful. He squeezed into my room with difficulty, said he supposed I knew what I was doing and offered to boil me an egg.

Worn out, I took a large dose of aspirin and woke, nine hours later, with no temperature, no sore throat and, in fact, no influenza. It took me two days to straighten things out. The oranges and fruit juice and all the frozen food we could not eat were taken round to less germ-resistant neighbours.

It seemed a little hard when one week later, unplanned, unco-ordinated and with the telephone out of action, both my husband and I went down simultaneously with influenza.

— BRENDA BROOKE

Cold Comfort



Cheese Flight

SIXTY-TWO journalists, men and women, set out from London Airport in an aircraft bearing a banner with this strange device: SWISS GRUYÈRE PROCESSED CHEESE FLIGHT. They were due back two days later; but they never returned to London Airport.

Everything on the outward journey, from the moment of saying "Cheese" for the photographers before embarking, went according to a generously conceived plan. The party landed at Basle in the customary full-cream condition induced by Swissair. Basle was *en fête*, the train to Berne on time, and the Schweizerhof Hotel was flying the Union Jack in cordial company with the Swiss and Bernese flags. There was a reception at the Rathaus, a tour of the House of District Parliament, dinner in Bernese restaurants, and night-clubs for the undefeated.

After a cheese conference next morning dairies, farms and factories were visited. At Herr Wertmuller's farm his Simmental cows were introduced by name—all *les girls* lying on straw laps of luxury. Above each a slate with the dates of her last calving and latest marriage. At Ersingen, the 175 lb. wheels of Emmenthal—veritable mill-stones, for these are the largest and heaviest cheeses in the world—were being handled by Ernst Gasser. The wheels for process at the factories—breaking up, melting down, wrapping in portions—are chosen at the moment of maturity preferred by each country: very ripe (over eight months) for Sweden and Germany; very raw (three months) for the United States; England in between. The day ended with a *fondue* party at the Kursaal, a culminating

gallimaufry of all things Swiss: *fondue* and *kirsch*, flags of the cantons, singers in national costume, *fahnen-schwingen*, dancing, yodelling, cow bells, alpenhorns.

Alpenhorns were in full blow again on the Alpen Postal Coaches to Gstaad next morning, hurling a phrase from *William Tell* at any opposition on the mountain roads. Speeches at the Palace Hotel luncheon were, this time, not of cheese but Gstaad... with a long list of famous visitors ending "... the big clown Grock and of course the Aga Khan." Afterwards, by *télé-siège* to the Wasserngrat, the high peak of the trip was reached. But those who cried out in the hot brilliant sunshine, surrounded by skiers and snow, "It isn't possible we shall be in London this evening!" were absolutely right. London Airport was closed by fog.



Next morning every airport in Europe being closed, the party was seen off from the station by a Swissair official who distributed boxes of chocolates, booklets, pretty postcards, lots of French money, assurances of lunch at Basle, and instructions to stand "no bloody nonsense" from French railway officials after the frontier was crossed. Chic and *savoir faire* were maintained throughout the long day in the slow train; but when the restaurant car was dropped and darkness fell a certain deterioration set in, more noticeable in the male than in the female. Britain's senior cookery queen still sat bolt upright and conversational, in her hat; and *Vogue* reprimanded the editress of *Home* for putting on fluffy pink mules—"They aren't even you." "I know they're not me; but don't you think everyone has *something* that isn't her?"

Nevertheless, everyone also had something useful: an air-cushion, travel-sickness pills, moistened face-cleansing pads, travel slippers, eye-drops, sleeping pills; the *Farmers' Weekly* had a cork-screw and every suitcase contained at least one month's supply of genuine Swiss Gruyère Processed Cheese.

— ALISON ADBURGHAM

Compendia

I SOMETIMES think that they
Who wear a mother's shoes
Are only there to say
What's Where and Which is Whose.

— E. M.





Dollops of Drivel

THE steel industry's future is still being fought over with ferocity and complete disregard for the quite considerable interests involved—national and local, those of workers and managements alike. A new mood of manufactured bitterness is being created which is not the atmosphere in which the labour and financial problems of an industry that has a recession on its plate can best be tackled.

A deceptively emollient reassurance came from a speech of Mr. Gaitskell's earlier this year. In this he said that when the steel industry was renationalized (there is of course no change in this objective) "full and fair compensation" would be paid. How these two adjectives are to be defined is almost any politician's guess. But at least these words swept away the vindictive "Strauss formula" propounded by the former Minister of Supply which said in effect that when it renationalized steel a Labour Government would not spend a penny more than last time and would, furthermore, deduct from the compensation the difference between the dividends paid on steel shares since denationalization and the $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent interest on the Government stock issued in compensation for steel shares when they were first taken over. This formula would have amounted to expropriation in respect of all new capital put and ploughed into the industry. It was wisely dropped.

Any hopes of a calmer contemplation of this problem were shattered by the hullabaloo which accompanied the "discovery" of Mr. Colin Hurry's six-months-old and openly-conducted quiz. Mr. Hurry's investigation may be criticized on several grounds. A well-chosen sample would have been much cheaper and just as reliable as the massive show of hands in marginal constituencies which he is organizing. When his original pilot poll showed that as a subject of political interest nationalization stood well at the bottom of the list, he should have left it at that.

These, however, are minor blemishes

compared with the vulgar monstrosities that muster for argument in the Labour Party's rejoinder. This pamphlet is the work of the Party Campaign Committee with Mr. Gaitskell at its head, and is presumably written in the kind of English which a Wykehamist deems to be colloquial and working-class. It is headed "Big Pools Win." It talks about the "do nothing shareholders who now pocket big dollops of dividends." The phony cloth-cap authors write about "the few lucky people" into whose stockings "a Santa-Claus Government has been stuffing ever bigger dividends."

This is not going to deceive many. In intellectual terms it is the equivalent of the superior being, talking down to "the people" by trying to copy the accents of the gutter. No one is taken in or impressed by the performance. The steel industry, which by most standards must be counted efficient and

whose prices stand up to the rest of the world, whose labour relations are an example to many, deserves better than this disappointing dollop of vulgarity.

As for the industry itself it is beginning to feel the first happy tremors of improvement in the order book. A vast concern like the Steel Company of Wales continues to thrive on the consumer boom and particularly on the continuing demand for more motor-cars and tin cans. A huge and diversified unit like the United Steel Companies is feeling the benefit of its width of interests in all kinds of steel, including the alloys that are increasingly needed in modern engineering. There is a rosier glow ahead for the industry. For those investors who are prepared to take the political risk illustrated by the Labour Party's latest pamphlet, the shares of these two companies are a very reasonable investment. — LOMBARD LANE

☆ ☆ ☆



Keepers of the House

THE Protector, as they called him, was made familiar to a later, wider public by Marie Lloyd's song "One of the Ruins that Cromwell knocked About a Bit"; the modern protector, reversing this process, could be called William Morris, for the work he started eighty years ago continues, and in unexpected crannies of the countryside. Some of the off-beat chores taken in its stride by the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, which Morris founded in 1877, are far-flung. To take two examples, its advice was sought on how to remove whitewash and soot from the frescoes of a rock tomb in Cyrene and how to preserve a mud fort in the Gold Coast.

It is, however, for the houses, churches, bridges, barns and windmills of England that the battle goes on. Battle? War, rather; some of the tussles last for years. In 1946 the owner of Gosfield Hall, Essex, which is practically three houses—Tudor, Wren and Early Georgian—wanted to pull the Georgian part down. From then until 1954 a grim sort of tennis match went

on, with preservation orders, compensation claims, renewed demolition applications, plans to knock down and convert into small house with piggery, and purchase notices buffeting to and fro, until at last the place was acquired for use as a nursing home. An even longer fight was lost. In 1910 Suffolk County Council threatened to do away with Brandon Bridge. Experts proved it safe, but the threat was renewed, experts still proving it safe, until the bridge's death warrant was signed in 1953. Defeat? Yes, but while there are watchdogs to put up a fight like this the pullers-down tend to think.

Sometimes salvation comes from afar. A little house in King's Lynn was to be closed. A photograph of it was published. A correspondent in America with an affection for England sent a cheque which enabled the Society to buy and repair the house. And sometimes salvation comes with the ironic twist of a Moral Fable. At Elsted in Sussex the little Saxon church with some fine herringbone masonry fell into disuse and a new church was built—not just for Elsted alone, but for Treyford too, aye, and Didling. But in less than a century this upstart was going downhill and the Saxon stone which the Victorian builder rejected was repaired and became once more the head of this corner of worship in Sussex, while the newfangled structure was cast down.

Eternal vigilance, not to mention a subscription list, is the price of security. There's a lot worth keeping and it costs a lot to keep it; a conservative policy backed by liberal aid.

— LESLIE MARSH



CRITICISM

BOOKING OFFICE

Über Alles

A Short History of Germany. E. J. Passant. Cambridge University Press, 20/-

Germany and World Politics in the Twentieth Century. Ludwig Dehio. Chatto and Windus, 18/-

MR. PASSANT's *Short History of Germany* is basically a reprint of a volume which he produced during the war as a Geographical Handbook for the Naval Intelligence Division of the Admiralty. The book was then classified as Restricted and it has now been released for publication. The main curiosity is why it should ever have been listed as Restricted for it is just a quite competent straightforward History of Germany, neither better nor worse than a hundred others which are served out as textbooks in every school in the country. The picture of a typescript being hawked round the Admiralty, with Top Secret on it, which, when opened, revealed that there was a war between France and Germany in 1870 and that Prussia was at that time ruled by a gentleman called Bismarck and a number of other pieces of confidential information of a similar nature is comic but not at all difficult to believe. The main criticism of Mr. Passant's book is that, under instruction to write about Germany, he obeyed his instruction too literally and thought that on no account was it his duty to write about anything else. Thus we get quite a fair account of the degree of responsibility of German statesmen for the 1914 war but no word about the degree of responsibility of, say, Russians. We are told nothing about the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina because presumably Germany did not annex it, nothing of Russian mobilization policy in 1914. We gather that Metternich failed, but what he failed in the reader of this book is left to guess for himself.

Dr. Dehio is a learned German who has given and collected some learned lectures on German politics in this century. He is an enlightened man and

the fair weight that he gives to everything that is to be said against German policies will make the reader pay all the more attention to some of the considerations that he urges in their favour. The book will, I think, be mainly interesting to English readers for the light that it throws on the way in which the German mind approaches these problems, which is in many ways so different from the British method of approach. There is what will seem to most of us an excessive amount of space given to somewhat wordy metaphysical speculations about the "mission" of this nation and that nation. There is much less about politicians and even about generals than we would expect, and a great deal more about speculative philosophers, many of whose names will be hardly known to most English readers. It is hard to say where the

balance of justice lies in this sort of judgment. The English habit is to pride itself on just going ahead without any especial theory, and the Continental will of course argue that this philistine empiricism suited the British very well at a time when they held all the plums and when "just going ahead" meant that they would keep going on holding them without bothering to think up a theoretical defence for doing so. And even if the Continental is too metaphysical, we have doubtless something to gain from understanding his method of approach. The trouble is that, however justified the accusation against the British that they were only anxious to hold on to their possessions may have been in other periods, it is not a fault of which we can be very reasonably accused just at the moment.

— CHRISTOPHER HOLLIS

NOVEL FACES—LVII



RAYMOND CHANDLER

When thick-ear fiction gives its eldritch call Chandler displays the thickest ear of all.

NEW FICTION

Before Noon. Ramon Sender. Gollancz, 21/-

Ramon Sender's distinguished trilogy *Before Noon*, glowing, leisurely, full of incident, humour and stories, has more the nature of an autobiography than a novel. The first part deals with the early boyhood of the hero, Pepe, leader of the village lads. With the years his family fortunes change, but unchanged throughout the narrative is Pepe's love for Valentina, who adores him. In the second book Pepe is sent to school, where he comes under the influence of the saintly lay-brother, who believes every man has a halo because "there is not a man without a conscience." The lay brother gives him a marble bust which acquires symbolical importance in the third book when Pepe, now adolescent, places it on a fountain where a child has been drowned.

The whole gives a detailed and, one feels, wonderfully true picture of middle-class boyhood in Spain. Apart from a few Americanisms, the translation conveys the tranquil beauty of Sender's prose.

— O. M.

The Ruined Boys. Roy Fuller. André Deutsch, 15/-

Though he has apparently abandoned the writing of superior thrillers, which marked his début as a novelist, Mr. Fuller's narrative skill is so outstanding



as to impart to an account of life at a building society headquarters or—as here—a minor public school some of the compulsive readability of a suspense-story: a gift frequently claimed for “serious” writers but rarely borne out in reality. Classic ingredients such as the protagonist’s gradual change from a desperate desire to conform to a final realization of the dreaded but admired headmaster’s fallibility, an abortive romance between two members of the staff, or the hero’s growing affinity with a formerly despised junior boy are—by virtue of the author’s controlling intelligence, sense of humour, and enviably exact choice of words—used in a manner far removed from that of *Scissors* or *David Blaize*, making this one of the few really adult school stories to be presented from a pupil’s viewpoint. One would protest, however, against the impression conveyed by the blurb, which describes the setting as a “bad school” with a “monstrous headmaster,” misrepresenting, surely, Mr. Fuller’s basic intention in the cause of sensationalism.

— J. M.-R.

Nymph and Shepherds. Richard Cavendish. *Cassell*, 25/-

This youthful light novel seems at first to contain bits of all the light novels that ever were. There is a Home Counties village, a “progressive” journalist who has bought the Hall and arouses intensive opposition and support by wanting to organize lectures on sex education, a young hero just down from Oxford on trial as the journalist’s assistant, who tumbles gaily in the hay with his employer’s wife, comic colonels, rich,

boorish young men and lots of willing girls.

Yet somehow, though the book is a muddle, and in bits rather old-fashioned, its high spirits and felicities of observation do give it life: it entertained me although I read it when lowered by ‘flu. The scholarly, isolated rector, who discusses Bishop Jewel with the hero, shows, I imagine, the direction in which Mr. Cavendish is likely to develop. In ten years he will probably be trying to buy up copies of this book. To call a novel “promising” is often patronizing and deathly, so I’ll settle for “pleasant and hopeful.”

— R. G. G. P.

Fee Fi Fo Fum. Osbert Sitwell. *Macmillan*, 15/-

Most of us will remember with pleasure Sir Osbert Sitwell’s version of “Dick Whittington” which appeared in *Horizon*. The wit of that little satire made me open in happy anticipation the author’s collected fairy stories: *Fee Fi Fo Fum*. I was, I fear, disappointed.

The author tackles most of the traditional tales but treats them without much originality. The irony that gave edge to the story of Dick and the cat that loved him too much cannot adequately be replaced by jokes about the National Trust and the Welfare State. We have had them before and, besides, Tory freedom has made most of them out of date. I found Jack (in Grudgeland) frankly a bore, but liked Cinderella and her much-wronged sisters, Bluebeard, whose surviving wife is ruined by death-duties, and Beauty, whose Beast changes into the television star Holland Clinker. The tedium of most of the stories is

relieved by delightful touches such as the plea of Red Riding Hood’s wolf: “You must try not to think of me as a wolf but merely as a fellow-traveller.” — O. M.

The Last Frontier. Alistair MacLean. *Collins*, 15/-

Mr. MacLean, two of whose previous novels are to be filmed (one at a cost of two million pounds), has created a British espionage agent colder, more ruthless, and physically tougher than James Bond: Michael Reynolds (who can speak Hungarian with a Budapest accent) pulls out teeth loosened by a blow from an AVO giant and throws them on the floor, quickly recovers from severe man-handling when treated with horse liniment, successfully resists the effects of Actedron administered by a nerve-surgeon turned prison-commandant and survives several more hairbreadth escapes to fulfil his mission: the repatriation of a British ballistics expert held by Russian agents in Hungary. In this he is assisted by a saintly Ukrainian general who knows the real answer to Communism, and a ubiquitous Polish count (expert at disguise), not to mention the general’s daughter, whom the author describes, perhaps too candidly, as “a pair of blue eyes and golden hair without any personality to go with them”: all of these stock types easy to cast in the inevitable screen version, even though the late Conrad Veidt is no longer available to play the count.

— J. M.-R.

A Travelling Woman. John Wain. *Macmillan*, 13/6

John Wain’s fourth novel reads like a women’s magazine story revamped by a cynical critic. Perhaps it is.

The characters, suburban couchant, are a dreary lot even in their persistent amatory exploits, and the plot—such as it is—creaks and groans under a load of labelled artifice. *A Travelling Woman* starts well. There are hints of the rich humour of which Wain is capable, there is sensitive observation and convincing dialogue, but very soon the sands of inspiration run out and the yarn becomes a yawn. A disappointment.

— A. B. H.

The Day It Rained Forever. Ray Bradbury. *Hart-Davis*, 16/-

Mr. Bradbury’s new collection confirms his decline. His style has become self-conscious, and he employs it misguidedly to cover the exhausted state of his invention. It was his unusual way with extra-earthly themes that gave Mr. Bradbury’s early stories their distinction; now he has come back to earth he is turning into a kind of sub-Saroyan. He should take his old books down from the shelf, re-read *The Fire Balloons* and *Zero Hour*, and resolve always to write as well as that.

Still, in a collection of twenty-three Bradburys there are bound to be some winners, and there is a touch of the old

quality in *The Wonderful Ice-Cream Suit*, *And the Rock Cried Out and Almost the End of the World*. But they are very ordinary stuff beside the Martian Chronicles.

— B. A. Y.

Other New Books

The Ark in our Midst. R. S. R. Fitter. Collins, 18/-

This book is about man's interference with nature. It traces its effect, intended or accidental, on the animal population of the British Isles—on every beast, bird, fish, amphibian and reptile living wild. It is indeed a comprehensive survey and the research put into it glistens out of every page.

All dedicated naturalists must surely find it absorbing. Others may be daunted by its very range, summarized by a lengthy introduction, but there is plenty to fascinate: the existence, for instance, of wild wallabies in Derbyshire, the menace of the mink, and the motives of the "acclimatizers," the men and women who have tirelessly been importing species for centuries, seldom with the results intended. Though this is a thorough and essentially didactic work, Mr. Fitter never lets his matter weigh down his style and misses no chance of neat, anecdotal illustration. — G. B.

The Eccentric Design. Marius Bewley. Chatto and Windus, 25/-

In this successor to *The Complex Fate*, Mr. Bewley "deals with literature in which the American artist has endeavoured to confront and understand his own emotional and spiritual needs as an American." The essays are so persuasive, well-written and sensible that they would not have lost by being presented as straightforward reprints of articles in critical periodicals. Unfortunately, they are forced into the framework suggested by the sub-title: "Form in the Classic American Novel." Rather half-heartedly Mr. Bewley says that action is form, but his occasional references to this doubtful theme remain *obiter dicta*.

It is impossible to summarize the packed critical argument in a short note. It starts from the controversy between Hamilton and Jefferson, taking a strongly Jeffersonian line, closely studies select novels and tales of Cooper, Hawthorne, Melville, James and Scott Fitzgerald, and ends with the collapse of the American dream and the Americanness of the American novel. The brilliant discussion of Cooper will be particularly fresh to the English reader, who still tends to regard him as nearer to Ballantyne than to James.

— R. G. G. P.

Paper Boats. E. M. Butler. Collins, 16/-

Here are selected snatches of personal history together with studies of unusual people set in war-racked places and thrown up against a background of strange literature all illumined by the

writer's sane and delectable English prose. Oddly enough Miss Butler, one of our foremost authorities on obscure German writings, has always longed for a field of lively action free from the prison walls of academic behaviour, but it has been her fate to be led first by Heine and the Saint-Simonians and later by Rilke, Laube, Pückler-Muskau and scores of others deeper and deeper into the suffocating literary blind alleys of Teutonic mysticism, black magic and evil addiction.

Searching to produce some unifying interpretation she has succeeded, so it seems she feels in retrospect, only in launching a fleet of rather flimsy *bateaux d'essai*. There is an element of credulity as well as of natural rebellion about her, and to the end her immensely likeable good-humour carries an under-current of perplexity.

— C. C. P.

Conrad the Novelist. Albert J. Guerard. O.U.P., 30/-

"He was," writes Professor Guerard of Conrad, "behind his mask of a hard conservative ethic, the most personal of the great English novelists. And his method respects that fact." In this diligent, affectionate study Professor Guerard attempts to strip the mask off Conrad and to suggest how far his novels reflect the temporal events and spiritual vicissitudes of his life. *Almayer's Folly*,

The Nigger of the "Narcissus," Lord Jim, Nostromo, Chance: all reveal their tiny facets under the microscope; all in turn have their fictional skins peeled off, adroitly, and their hidden meanings revealed. What of Conrad's Marseilles adventure, which seems to defy biographers as constantly as the lost months of Wordsworth's life? Professor Guerard enlightens us, and it is always fascinating to see the shadow line drawn between fact and fiction. *Conrad the Novelist* is the work of an expert, written for experts (indeed, for academics), but even the reader little versed in Conrad must admire the professor's loving expertise.

— J. R.

AT THE PLAY

The Bed Bug (LONDON UNIVERSITY DRAMA SOCIETY)
International Variety (PALACE)

IN 1929 the Soviet authorities must have been even more pitifully sensitive about their régime than we imagined. In that year Mayakovsky's *The Bed Bug* was played in Moscow, and caused such a flutter in the official dovescotes that shortly afterwards the author shot himself. It was said to be a merciless satire; but it now turns out a curiously damp squib. André Barsacq has just produced it in Paris, and although the French



PIERRE BEL

[International Variety
NINO

critics are all agreed on the brilliance of his production, they are astonished to find the play about as lethal as a pea-shooter.

As I was, when I saw it done by the London University Drama Society. Wit, no. In a series of rough charades it rags with slapstick humour an oaf who tries to rise in society by a bourgeois marriage. A fire consumes his wedding party and

REP SELECTION

Playhouse, Nottingham, *Hamlet*, until March 21st.

Theatre Royal, Windsor, *The Tunnel of Love*, until March 14th.

Queen's Theatre, Hornchurch, *A Penny for a Song*, until March 14th.

Colchester Rep, *Seagulls Over Sorrento*, until March 7th.

the firemen's hoses freeze him into a block of ice, in which he is discovered fifty years afterwards and brought back to life in a Russia purged of sex and alcohol and, above all, of vermin. Resurrected with him is a bed bug, and together they strike terror in this brave new world; there are outbreaks of kissing and drunkenness and even of dancing as the bed bug is hunted desperately through the streets. Only when these disgusting relics of the bad old days are safely caged in the Zoo can the sons of hygiene breathe again.

The biting criticism from which the Soviet leaders recoiled appears to have been no more than a friendly dig in the ribs. The writing is loose, and padded out with enormous and deafening crowd scenes in which half London University seems to be engaged. It would be difficult, perhaps impossible, to get much form or shape into this play; Dimitri Makaroff's production made a brave attempt, and his cast managed to fill in the outlines of the leading characters, Frank Smith being the most successful as the dynamic zoo-director.

The programme of international variety is based on two singers, Connie Francis from America and Toni Dalli from Italy, and since they both cling to a microphone it is hard to say how good they are. Miss Francis even walks about with a portable one on a string, which gives the awkward impression that she is

PUNCH EXHIBITIONS

An exhibition of fifty years of *Punch* cinema cartoons and caricatures is on view at the Muswell Hill Odeon, by arrangement with the Rank Organization.

The "*Punch* in the Theatre" Exhibition is now at the Marlowe Theatre, Canterbury and the New Theatre, Bromley, Kent, and will open at Colchester Repertory Theatre on March 6.

being played from the wings by a big-game fisherman. If you care for "pop" numbers, gruellingly sentimental and cascading with amorous clichés, then you may find her style attractive; the first-night audience clearly liked her. Signor Dalli is a young tenor with a winningly modest manner and draws his repertoire mainly from opera.

TV supplies Dennis Spicer, an accomplished ventriloquist of originality, and George Martin, a bloke-in-the-pub comedian who struggles cheerfully with poor stuff. The Hedley Ward Trio are versatile singing instrumentalists, and I always like Nino the dog, who has the stage to himself while he tours it walking on top of rubber balls, and even comes out alone to make a begging curtain call. But for sheer skill and brilliance give me, of the whole programme, the Six Flying de Pauls, Australian girt-tumblers of phenomenal pace and resilience, and Pierre Bel, a juggler who turns whirling batons into a piece of art. The evening is, so to speak, glued together by the John Tiller Girls of whose hypnotic precision I never tire.

Recommended

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

Five Finger Exercise (Comedy—23/7/58), exceptional first play. *The Grass is Greener* (St. Martin's—10/12/58), charming new comedy. *Irma la Douce* (Lyric—23/7/58), French underworld musical.

—ERIC KEOWN

AT THE PICTURES

Danger Within *The Hanging Tree*

IT is in a way a bit of bad luck for *Danger Within* (Director: Don Chaffey) that it should open in the same week as the revival of *La Grande Illusion*, Jean Renoir's classic that was first shown here in 1937 or early 1938. The "subject," for people who judge by subject, is the same: both are stories about prisoners of war, and because the French film is more profound and has more philosophical implications, it gets—particularly as this is the complete version, reissued with the blessing of the director—more respectful attention.

But *Danger Within*, based (script: Bryan Forbes and Frank Harvey) on Michael Gilbert's novel *Death in Captivity*, is excellent in its own line. Since seeing it, I have heard that it is founded on fact, but it is immensely more entertaining than the average "worthy" British war film that relies on authenticity for much of its appeal.

The scene is a prison camp in Italy in 1943, and the staggering climax is the successful escape of four hundred prisoners, undetected, in broad daylight. The superficial incidents, the ingenious mechanics of escape, the mounting suspense as the moment (if you can call it a moment) approaches—all these are

gripping and interesting enough in themselves; but the strength of the piece is, as it should be, in character.

More than any P.O.W. story before, this admits—and very entertainingly—that when conditions are not too bad many of the prisoners are content simply to pass the time as they wait for release; the "escaping types" being a none too popular minority, "comic-strip heroes" often snarled at because they "muck things up for everybody else." There are plenty of men who are having quite a good time: the actor (Dennis Price) who is producing *Hamlet*, the "keep-fit toughs" who ask for nothing better than rigger and gymnastics, the enthusiast who explores the sewers, and will at the slightest provocation lecture on them, the dedicated card-players, and all those who simply like to lie in the sun.

There is an informer in the camp; by half-way through the picture we know who he is, but so far from relaxing the suspense this revelation increases it. The dominating characters are Baird (Richard Todd), head of the Escape Committee, and Huxley (Bernard Lee), the Senior British Officer who has to balance his sympathy with escape attempts against his responsibility for the



[*Danger Within*
Major Marquand—MICHAEL WILDING
Capitano Benucci—PETER ARNE

prisoners in general. Both these parts are admirably played, and so are innumerable other smaller ones; the script is excellent (notice the effectiveness of its design, how the general picture of the camp at the beginning is repeated at the climax when we watch every detail of it with new eyes); and the direction is another triumph for Mr. Chaffey (remember *The Man Upstairs* last October).

The Hanging Tree (Director: Delmer Daves) is one of those rather highly-coloured, emotional Westerns. I mean highly-coloured in a metaphorical sense, but this is also highly-coloured literally: the Technicolor photography (Ted McCord) provides many richly pleasing effects, both out of doors (the Montana gold diggings, 1873) and in (e.g. the illuminated green poker-table, with glowing red-gold faces and clothes all about). The central character is a mysterious Doctor (Gary Cooper) who saves a young man (Ben Piazza) from lynching and a young woman (Maria Schell) from the effects of killing exposure to the sun, upsetting them both by remaining arbitrary, distant and unapproachable. But he is skilled with a gun too, and when himself about to be lynched for shooting the stupid gross prospector (Karl Malden) who has tried to rape her he is saved in the nick of time by . . . Yes, yes, it's a conventional ending, and contrived without much attention to the mood of the story; nevertheless there is quite a bit of good in the piece. The interest of the mining-camp detail is really what carries it; the motives and the characterization are basically artificial.

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

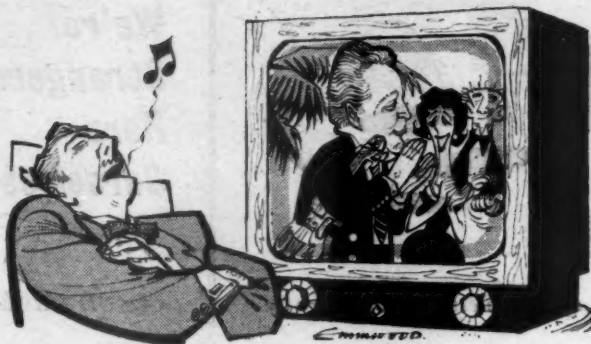
In London: *Separate Tables* (25/2/59) and *The Horse's Mouth* (18/2/59) are my main recommendations. Most people like *Gigi* (18/2/59). *Rally Round the Flag, Boys!* (25/2/59) has many excellent laughs, but labours them rather. Don't overlook the very good and entertaining documentary *March to Aldermaston* ("Survey," 25/2/59) showing with the revived classic *La Grande Illusion*.

The best release is the fine Western, *The Big Country* (21/1/59). The French film called *En Cas de Malheur* is very much better than the English title *Love is My Profession* (15/10/58) might lead you to suppose. Simple behind-the-TV-scenes fun with Arthur Askey in *Make Mine a Million*. — RICHARD MALLETT

ON THE AIR

Trios and Top Towns

FOR my taste there is something a shade too twee about Christian Simpson's production of "Max Jaffa" (BBC). One would not ask that a "popular" show should be served up in quite so stark and reverent a manner as



Max Jaffa Introduces

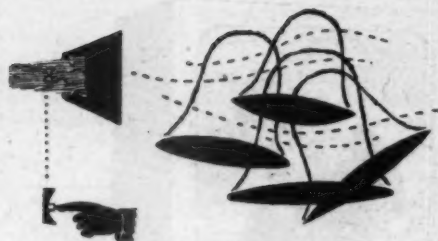
the admirable "Celebrity Recitals" (BBC), but the elegant trappings and matey titters are tending to weigh the proceedings down. It is almost as though Mr. Simpson were apologizing for only having at his disposal a trio and a group of singers and the odd guest. This is far from necessary. The trio, although for the most part it dispenses the sort of music once associated with tea-shops in the nicer spas, is composed of three first-rate musicians who play with style and ease and that mutual understanding which is always a pleasure to watch in an accomplished chamber group. The singers, often more daring in their choice of material, are delightfully relaxed and very good to hear. The guests, frequently celebrities in their particular fields, give a touch of splendour. All this would surely add up to a half-hour *musical* of considerable charm without the sugar and spice so elegantly sprinkled by Mr. Simpson.

I am allergic to amateur talent contests, although when pressed I am usually capable of guessing which contestant will gain the public's vote. (This is not difficult: if there is no blind pianist, the lame contralto is pretty sure to win.) I therefore approached the "Top Town Tournaments" (BBC) with no great surging of the spirit. This was churlish of me, for the shows so far have reached as high a standard as anyone could reasonably expect. There are some branches of variety in which amateurs never shine (comedians and chorus-girl routines spring to mind): but I have seen acts in "Top Town" which have provided better entertainment than certain professional shows I could name. The solid backing of the orchestra (led, need I say, by Eric Robinson) and Barney Colehan's swift production are half the battle here. Still, if nothing else, one likes to be reminded that there are people all over the country who are prepared to take the trouble to learn to sing, or dance, or play an instrument, or prestidigitate,

just for the fun of it. As a measure of the interest I have found in these Top Town tussles I may say that I have more than once snorted with rage or incredulity at the decisions of the panels of judges. Not, of course, that it matters very much *who wins*—except to a few dozen doting mothers.

I am disappointed in Jimmie Hanley, who, having taken over as Inquisitor in "Dotto" (ATV), manages to add to the general embarrassment by pronouncing "picture" as "pitcher" and reading some of the questions as though deliberately trying to make them more difficult. (I have forgotten how he recently pronounced "Eire," but he certainly had me baffled for a while.) I am grateful to the BBC interviewer who stood in a street surrounded by Russians during the Macmillan visit and assured us (at considerable cost in film to the Corporation) that if any of them had been able to speak to him in English they would have done so. I am prepared to watch just one more chapter in "The Davy Jones Saga" (BBC Welsh), but I have a suspicion that it won't improve. These heavy-handed larks remind me of the strip cartoons in *Chips* and *Comic Cuts* when I was a child. Surely somebody in Wales can write light comedy? And surely somebody can act and produce it on a level just a little higher than the one-act romps ground out in huts by Women's Institutes? Finally, I congratulate Dennis Towler and Robert Reid on a brilliant journalistic idea soundly carried out in the "Second Enquiry" series (BBC West Region Film Unit). Mr. Reid's commentaries have sometimes been on the ponderous side, but the notion of finding out on the spot what progress has been made in problems which formed the subjects of documentary investigations in the past, often involving interviews with the people who appeared in the original programme, was brave and praiseworthy.

— HENRY TURTON



Concluding a Novelette of the Future by

We're Strangers Here Ourselves—6

CLAUD COCKBURN

HAVING made his thoroughly offensive statement the hound Towser came out with a noisy laugh, and then repeated what he had said. "Sir-Sir Browning's all wet. Tell him I said so." Seeming pleased with himself, he was starting to do the laugh over again when Sir-Sir directed a sharp bark at him, and the hound lay down with his head on his paws, looking injured and frustrated.

The Eastcliffes and the Waynes sat in a somewhat appalled silence.

"Not very nice of the mass-contributors to talk like that in your dog's presence," said Caroline.

"Doesn't bother me," said Sir-Sir buoyantly. As advised and instructed by all competent doctors he had dealt with the "unforeseen stress moment" by adjusting his breathing so as to operate his adrenalin supply in a manner productive of calm and confidence. "But it is a bit disappointing to find that Towser is still apparently picking things up parrot-wise; just a conditioned reflex—not really conversing."

"All the same," said Jane, shocked by the hound's unthinking rudeness.

"Don't draw any rash conclusions about the mass-contributors," advised Sir-Sir. "It's just their way of expressing themselves. Actually, according to our Surveys, they have a lot of respect for Co-ordination—they know the country couldn't get on without it. You can trust the sound common sense of the British mass-contributor. He knows damn well that what's good for General Co-ordination's good for him too. Ultimately, of course," he added. "In the long run. London wasn't built in a day. No royal road to prosperity. Hard work. Increased contribution."

"Blah, blah, blah," said Towser suddenly, and then lowered his head to his paws again, making as though he had not spoken.

"Come, Towser," said Caroline hurriedly. "Come and have a nice lie down in your nice kennel and give those reflexes a rest. Your comments are getting just a little intrusive."

"Thank you, Dame," said Sir-Sir heartily.

At the word "Dame," uttered just as he reached the door, Towser again seemed to respond to an invisible stimulus.

"Will you look at that Dame," he said. "Underneath the beech trees, underneath the moon. Our Caroline loves our Bernard. Caroline loves

Bernard." He raised his voice in song. "Underneath the beech trees, underneath the moon, Caroline and Bernard . . ." The concluding lines which floated back to them as Caroline slammed the door behind her and the hound were unmistakably obscene.

Bernard blushed all over.

Sir-Sir had pumped so much adrenalin into his bloodstream that he had the air of a man who has simply been waiting for some problem or situation to arise so that he can take it in hand and master it.

"Something in what that dog says, you know," he said. "You might fare a lot further and do a lot worse than the Dame."

"Well, quite," said Bernard. "But look here . . ."

Sir-Sir breezed on jovially. "And here's a little item that'll kindle the lovelight in your eye, my boy. I've just had word that Earl Thompson's had it. I told you he couldn't take a war. Those people at the B.B.C. can't adjust. Couple of days ago they put out a battle story from somewhere along the route to Mars—our lifeline, you know—and no one could tell whether it was supposed to be a decisive victory bringing the final end of the conflict appreciably nearer, or a grave setback which yet, by its very nature, would steel the nation to greater effort."

"And which was it?" Ann asked.



"Good-o! Sally can her father get the same answer we do."

"We don't know," said Sir-Sir, "but it obviously ought to have been one or the other. People want to know what they're supposed to be adjusting to, don't they?"

"But how does that affect me and Dame Caroline?" Bernard asked, still blushing but probing on.

"Because," said Sir-Sir, "with a little wise thought here, and a bit of prudent counsel there, we can get the Dame into that fool of an Earl's job—Comptroller of National Broadcasting no less." He beamed. "Every lad loves a Comptroller," he carolled.

Bernard tried to put his finger on a point. "But does she know anything about it?" he wanted to know. "Has she ever had anything to do with broadcasting and television, and so on?"

"Absolutely not," said Sir-Sir. "So she's in the clear. No record of failure, and a fresh mind. And, of course, the top-level approach. What d'you say?"

"I'll go and talk to her," said Bernard, sudden determination in his eye. Sir-Sir watched him affectionately as he left the room.

"He's adjusting well, that lad," he said. "Getting his bearings."

A telephone signal pulsated in the room. Sir-Sir took it and conversed briefly.

"That was If-I-May-Say-So calling from Cape Wrath. The war's over. Wants to know if it's all right with Co-ordination for him to go out to the moon and talk to the troops."

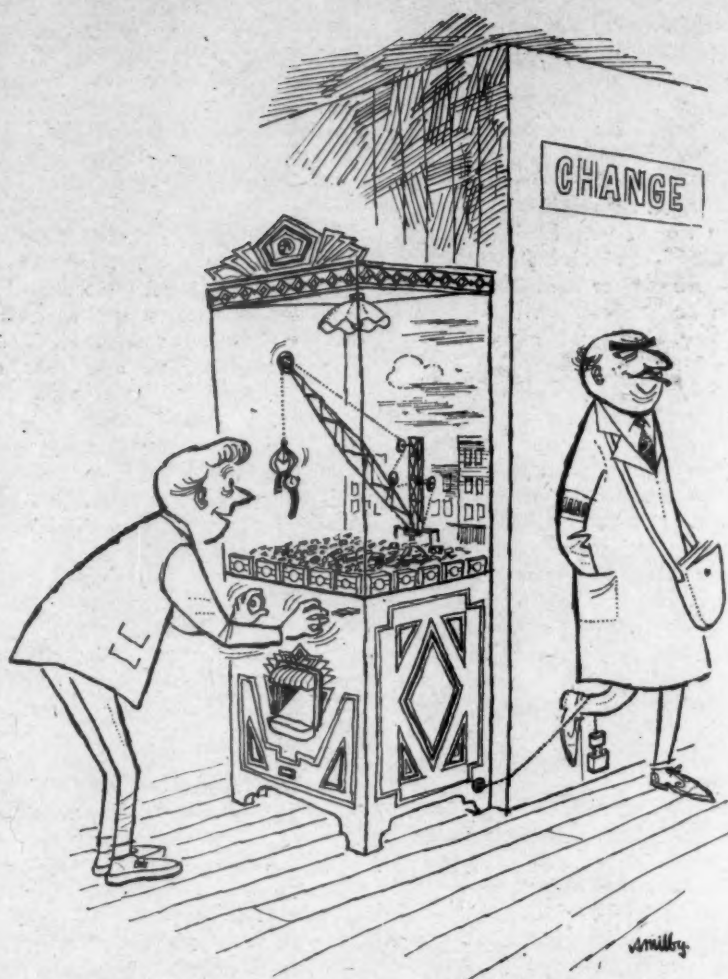
"Have we won?" Jane asked.

"Better schedule it as Peace with Honour, I think," said Sir-Sir. "We don't know yet how the outcome will affect the general situation—if at all. Still, it's peace. You might just touch the bell, would you, Jane? The switch is beside you."

She pressed a switch. Immediately the sound of a carillon, low but melodious, broke out from a point at the base of the dome above their heads. Sir-Sir rose to his feet, and stood at attention. The others, though momentarily taken by surprise, hastened to follow his example. He had his eyes shining splendidly, his face turned a little upwards, his lips parted in a kind of controlled ecstasy.

The carillon continued for fifteen seconds and ceased.

"We always ring the bells for peace,"



Sir-Sir explained. "It's a lovely old custom. I believe it goes right back to the seventeenth century or thereabouts."

He relaxed. "Now, about this caper our P.M. wants to go on. We don't much care for him running around loose in space. Between ourselves, the fellow's only about half co-ordinated."

He seated himself, pondered, and sprang up again, aglow with eagerness and having a boy-style smile.

"What we'll do is," he cried, "we'll all go. You four and Caroline and me and If-I-May-Say-So. I'll have Co-ordination lay on a moon-ship. He can get the heliflight from Cape Wrath and join us at the pad."

He rushed from the room. He rushed back to say "Ann, would you register a Co-ordination statement on the Peace?"

"What about?"

"Women and Peace through the Ages. My great-grandma's message to

you. She'd have been pro-peace, I suppose, wouldn't she?"

"Absolutely," said Ann.

"Well there you are," shouted Sir-Sir. "Do run along and do it now."

He rushed out again, Ann following. "You have to admit he's rather fun," said Jane.

"Fun?" said Henry suspiciously.

"Such an absolute bag of tricks. I wouldn't have missed him for worlds."

"I'm afraid I'm not adjusting too well," said Henry with some bitterness. "Fancy old Bernard taking up with Dame Caroline like that. I thought for a while she was making passes at me."

"So she was for a while," said Jane.

"But Ann told her your heart was another's. Told her your love for me was like a dark, liquid flame, pulsing with the mysterious current of life itself. She said you loved like men loved of yore, before the twenty-first

century fouled up the deep rhythmic simplicity of it all. It set the Dame back on her hunkers rather."

"Egad!" cried Henry. "That's telling them." He gazed at her fondly. Then his face clouded. "But what about *your* rhythmic simplicity?" he said. "I thought you had a mysterious current for Sir-Sir. I thought it was something"—he groped for a phrase—"something bigger than both of you."

"Sir-Sir Browning . . ." Jane was beginning, when a voice at the door said "Stuff it up your flaming jersey. He's all wet."

"I wouldn't say that," said Jane defensively. "He has tremendous Go."

"Go, go, go," said Towser.

"Damn that dog," said Henry; "can't we get any privacy? I thought you were just going to say something sweetly intimate. We don't want that hound shouting the odds all over the house."

"Darling Henry," said Jane.

"Darling," said Towser, his head cocked intelligently.

"Get out, you brute," shouted Henry, at the same time breathing heavily as he practised First Steps in Adrenalin Control.

They were interrupted again—time to try on and select space-travel suits.

"Rather a rush," Ann said, as they left for the take-off pad. "As compared with what?" asked Sir-Sir. "Time, you know, is what you make it. As in music, so in life."

All the way to the Moon, John Welfare Jones kept rehearsing to them

the little talks he was going to give to the troops. "I want to keep it meaty and matey," he said. "They're tough eggs, these technicians. Half of them are delinquents, of course."

"Of course," said Towser, who was now discovered to have stowed away for the trip.

"The P.M. means," explained Caroline, "that a lot of our scientists and technicians turn out to lack moral and social sense for some reason or other. They don't understand what we call the Humanities. So we ship them off to the space-wars—for rehabilitation, naturally, of course."

"As in the old naval press-gangs," murmured Henry.

They toured Moon-stations and John Welfare Jones made meaty, matey speeches about peace and war. He had memorized some dirty jokes based on electronics, which were unintelligible to the party from the Andes.

At one station they found a family party—an elderly couple with children and grandchildren—who were taking off for the other side of Venus. "To get away from it all," said the elderly man.

"Why?" Jane asked.

"The earth and the human race are headed for disaster," said the elderly man. "Nothing to stop it. If it doesn't happen one way, it'll happen another."

"You'd think," said Ann, "they'd stick around and try to stop it happening—whatever it is."

"Some people like to feel the world's going to pot," said Caroline. "When

they feel old, or failed, it makes them happier to think everything and everyone else is going to collapse too. I don't feel like that at all," she said, kissing Bernard on the ear.

"Nor I," said Henry, embracing Jane.

"And who knows?" said Sir-Sir, looking at Ann with his tremendously radiant smile, and then gazing out over the route to Mars, along which the heavy peace-time traffic was already being resumed. "Perhaps one day, when I've got all this space out here better co-ordinated, and you're perhaps a Lady, we might adjust to one another."

"I'd like to be a Lady," said Ann. "In the meantime there's lots to see and do, isn't there?"

"Certainly is," said Sir-Sir. "I'm not one for rash prophecies, but I don't mind betting that a hundred years from now the human race will have made some real progress."

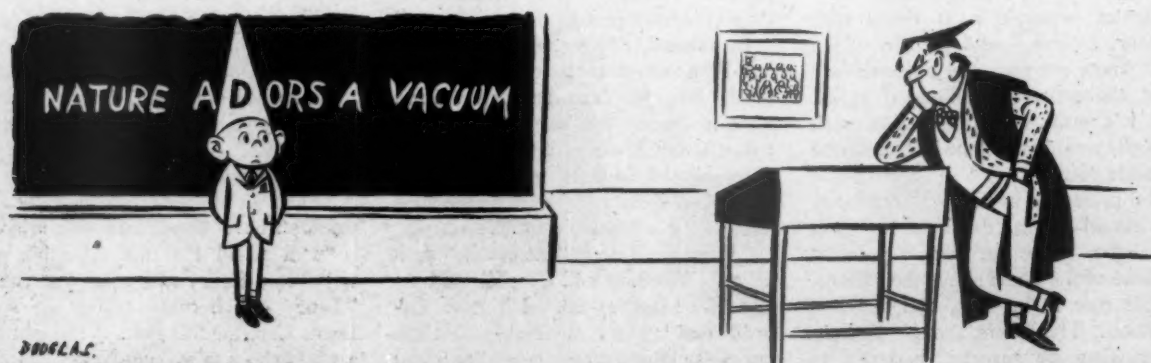
"Time being what one makes it," said Ann.

"Quite so," said Sir-Sir. "You're beginning to adjust already. That's great." He waved a gay hand at the universe.

"Everything's great," he said.

"Great," said Towser, who had joined them unseen, and now gazed at what was visible of the solar system. "Great," he repeated, in his flat, canine tones, which made it hard to determine whether he spoke in derision or enthusiasm.

THE END



DOUGLAS

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